THE CHILD AND THE BOOK

Agnes Junkin Peery Emily J. Werner

Book 2

THE BIBLE

BV
1475.9
.P43
1942
v.2

Island Press New York

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JAN 7 1946
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

BV 1475.9 .P43 1942 v.2
Peery, Agnes Junkin.
The child and the Book

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
COMMUNITY PRINTING CO. NEW YORK CITY

LIBRARY OF PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THE CHILD AND THE BOOK:

A Teachers' Guide in the Christian Education of Ten, Eleven, Twelve, and Thirteen-Year-Olds

BOOK TWO: FOR ELEVEN-YEAR-OLDS

THE BIBLE

By

Agnes Junkin Peery and Emily J. Werner

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ISLAND WORKSHOP PRESS CO-OP, INC.
NEW YORK

OUTLINE OF COURSE

YEAR ONE—WHAT IS GOD LIKE?

YEAR TWO—THE BIBLE

YEAR THREE—WHAT CHRIST MEANS TO THE PRESENT-DAY WORLD

YEAR FOUR—THE CHRISTIAN CITIZEN

SUPPLEMENT (for all four years)

- Appreciation
- Explanation of Course: Our Reason for Being
- General Outline of Four-Year Course
- Practical Suggestions
- Helpful Books for Teachers and Children
- Story and Poem Index
- Picture Sources
- An Extra Story: The Packman's Wares

YEAR TWO: THE BIBLE

GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF THE YEAR'S WORK:

To introduce the children to the Bible as a book: its background, make-up, and practical value

To lead them into a greater appreciation of the Bible and to arouse a desire to know and use it

To develop the ability to use the Bible intelligently and habitually and to lead them to be "doers of the Word"

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Unit I

WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

(A Preliminary Examination of the Bible to Discover Its Nature, Authors, and General Content)

OBJECTIVES:

To acquaint the children with the facts concerning the Bible as a book: its general make-up, authorship, probable dates, time-span, and content

To lead them to appreciate its uniqueness and divine origin, while at the same time coming to realize the fact that it has come out of life

To develop in them skill in handling the book and finding specific references

QUESTIONS WHICH WILL HELP THE CHILDREN TO DISCOVER THE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTION, WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

What kind of book is the Bible?

Who wrote the Bible and when was it written?

POSSIBLE UNIFYING ACTIVITIES:

Making a Bible book-set out of cardboard, match boxes, or wood (two pieces hinged with a cloth binding, with several pages inserted)

Making a "poster book", with each poster representing one book of the Bible, depicting facts about its author, its nature, and its content in a variety of ways (e.g., drawings of interesting or favorite stories in Genesis, etc.; one or more favorite Psalms illustrated; some practical proverbs; striking verses, some promises of God, etc., from other books)

Making a set of scrolls, similar to above

SUGGESTIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL NOTEBOOK WORK:

Recording class discussions

Drawing a Bible chart showing the organization and general content of Bible books

THEME HYMN FOR UNIT:

Thy Word Is Like a Garden, Lord

MEMORY VERSES FOR UNIT:

II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:21

INTRODUCTORY SESSION:

LAUNCHING THE UNIT AS A WHOLE

Suggestions for Worship:

Preparing for Worship:

Learning a new song, "Thy Word Is Like a Garden, Lord"

Reading it together from words mimeographed or written on the board

Talking about why the Bible is like a garden, a mine, a starry host, an armory

Singing the words and tune together

Learning to find places in the Bible, to "explore the mine"

Learning to find the four quarters of the Bible:

Genesis to Samuel, Samuel to Psalms, Psalms to Matthew, Matthew through Revelation

Turning to familiar stories in each section

Turning to unfamiliar books and last of all to II Timothy

Finding, reading, and discussing the meaning of II Timothy 3:16-17, comparing Paul's idea to the idea back of the hymn the class has been learning

Leaving Bibles open at II Timothy 3:16 for us during worship

Worshiping:

Hymn: Some familiar hymn suitable for a "call to worship": "O Worship the Lord in the Beauty of Holiness," "O Worship the King," "When Morning Gilds the Skies"

Opening Prayer

A Story:

THE BOOKS THAT SPOKE

(A story based on a true incident told by the Rev. James N. Montgomery, missionary to China)

"*Shrr-di, shrr-di*—true, true," nodded the tall, black-robed old scholar at the back of the crowd.

Mr. Montgomery, preaching to a group of passers-by on the streets of a far-away city of North China, wondered that he should agree. Surely, no missionary had ever been to this town before. Nor had he ever heard of any Chinese Christians coming here. As far as he knew, he was the first Christian to have entered the gates of the town. And yet, here was an old man who seemed to be familiar with the stories about Jesus he was telling.

When the talk was over and the people began to ask questions or move away to their work, the old man made his way toward Mr. Montgomery. "The Holy Spirit is speaking through you," he said.

"All that you said was true."

"I am glad," answered Mr. Montgomery, "but may I ask how you came to learn of these truths?"

"Through these," replied the old gentleman as he reached to a pocket within his coat and brought forth four little paper-bound books, "through these four little books I have learned of the love of God. But that is a long story . . ."

"O, but I wish to hear it," answered Mr. Montgomery. "Come have some tea with me in this little shop here and tell me how you came to own and read those books."

"That I would be glad to do," replied the scholar, "for I, also, have many questions to ask of you."

Once seated at the table in the tea shop with Mr. Montgomery opposite and a crowd of listeners-in gathered round, he began:

"About two years ago, business took me to the *hsien* city (county seat) of our district and there, upon the street, I noticed a little book, similar to this one, which people were kicking about under their feet. As I came to it, I, too, almost kicked it from my path. Before I did so, however, the title attracted me and led me to pick it up. "The Good News According to St. John," I read. What could be the "Good News" and who was St. John? As I ate my rice that morning, I read the pages which followed that title and became intensely interested. 'For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son . . . He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life . . . If any man thirsts let him come unto me . . . I am the light of the world . . .' The statements in that book were astounding. But the story itself was even more astonishing. Here was a man who could have become a great king but who let himself be killed. Here was a man who loved others with such a love that he never thought of himself. I wanted to find out the rest of the story but the last pages were torn off and lost.

"All the rest of the day, I wandered about the streets thinking. I could not forget the words I had read. My mind was filled with questionings. Toward evening, as I came to the edge of the canal bank and stood watching the boats unload, I spied, on the prow of one boat, four books almost exactly like my own. Hardly believing my eyes, I went to the boatman and asked if he had more books like them.

" 'No,' he answered, 'but I don't want those. You may have them. Some man from a foreign land handed them to me. I have no time for reading.'

"And so I gave him some money and took the books back with

me to my home. I was glad to see that one complete copy of the 'Good News' by John was among them and was surprised to find that, though each of the books was written by a different man, they all told the same story.

"I read the books again and again and called in my friends to read them with me. We talked of the stories and of their meanings. We talked of the new teachings. We talked of how all the goodness of Confucius' sayings was here and yet how much more was here. We talked of how different this Jesus was from other men and of His promises to help us be different, too. We wondered how this Jesus could claim to die for the world and if that meant us too. We talked of knowing God as a Father and of living in a home with Him after death. It was all so strange and new. And yet it all sounded so true. We decided that His teachings were worth trying but did not know how to go about trying them.

"I have many questions to ask of you. In these four little books, we found that people mentioned other holy books. What are they? Where are they? Can they be bought today? When were these books written? Who were these writers? How does it happen that I am reading in my own language of things that happened in another country many, many years ago? There are so many things I want to know. Can you tell me where I can find my answers?"

And Mr. Montgomery did.

Unison Bible Reading: II Timothy 3:16-17
Silent Meditation on the wonder of the power of God's Word
Closing Prayer
Hymn: Thy Word is Like a Garden, Lord

Stimulating Questionings:

The teacher may stimulate questionings concerning the Bible by asking what the children in the group would have said in attempting to answer each one of the Chinese scholar's questions. The children may wish to list these questions on the board.

The class will probably find that there are some questions which they cannot answer. These questions should be written in a separate list on the board and any questions about the Bible which the children themselves have added to it.

Purposing:

With interest thus aroused, it will be a simple thing to lead the class to purpose to become better acquainted with our Bible: what it is, how it came to be, and how it has been carried to all parts of the world today.

Planning:

Deciding that a quest for books about the origin and nature of the Bible will have to be begun

Deciding that the school library, the community library, or libraries in private homes and ministers' studies might prove helpful

Deciding on "borrowing committees" to go to each of the above-mentioned book sources

Choosing committees to look in classroom history books to discover whether or not the Bible is mentioned

Choosing committees to look for pictures of old Bibles: the kind the Hebrews used, the kind the disciples used in the early church, different kinds used since

Deciding to look through the Bible as a whole before the next class session in order to be able to talk about what kind of a book it really is

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WHAT KIND OF BOOK IS THE BIBLE?

A Bible Test:

Mimeographed copies of the following Bible test may be given the children at the beginning of the session. It should be clearly understood, before the papers are distributed, that this test is not being given for the benefit of the teacher but to enable each individual to discover how much he knows about some of the outstanding facts about the Bible as a book. As there are ten blanks in the test, the children may grade themselves on the basis of one hundred, each question counting ten.

HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT YOUR BIBLE?

1. The Bible is divided into .....parts.
2. These parts are called .....and .....
3. There are .....books in the Bible.
4. The first book of the Bible is called ..... because it tells of .....
5. The stories of Jesus are found in .....
6. All of these books are bound in one cover and are called "The Word of ....." because .....
7. The Bible is sometimes called "The Book" because .....

The class should be allowed to discuss the answers and decide themselves upon the correct ones, looking in the Bible, when that

is possible, to back up their statements.

A Bible Hunt:

After taking the test revealing how much they know *about* the Bible, the children might like to play a game to discover how much they know about what is in the Bible itself, and how quickly and well they can find their way around in it.

First, the group might have a contest to see who can find familiar materials the most quickly. As each suggestion is made, all the children should start the search and should hold up their hands when the section is found. After finding it, they should tell the class the book and chapter in which the discovery was made.

Questions, such as the following, would be interesting and not too difficult:

Where would you look to find—

the ten commandments?

the story of the creation of the world?

a song of God's care?

the story of Samuel?

a story of the first Christmas?

Why are there four different stories of the life of Christ? What picture of Jesus does each give?

Next, the group might enjoy finding what whole books and groups of books are all about. Guided by the teacher, they might look for books of—

poetry and wisdom

stories of Jesus

letters of Christian living

history

messages of God given through His prophets

laws

As these books are discovered, their names may be written on the board by class secretaries under appropriate headings. When the "hunt" is over, every book in the Bible will appear on the list and the group will see that the Bible is truly a library of books on many varied subjects.

Deciding on a Means of Recording Discoveries:

The teacher may suggest that since all of this valuable information has been gleaned by the class, they may like to put it down

in a form that can be shared with others. Activities suggested by the group or by the teacher should be listed on a board, thoroughly discussed, and a vote taken. It should be kept in mind throughout the discussion that the activity chosen should be one through which further discoveries about the books of the Bible, made in later sessions, may be recorded. (See introduction to Unit I.)

Making Definite Plans:

After the form of the project has been decided upon, the details should be worked out and committees for the carrying out of these details appointed; e.g., if the group has decided to make a scroll for each book of the Bible, (recording on it the information concerning its general nature, authorship and date where these can be discovered, familiar stories and characters, and any illustrative pictures) they will wish, at this time, to appoint someone to secure a roll of white wrapping paper of about one foot in width, others to cut and bring sticks upon which the scrolls can be rolled, others to bring ribbons of different colors (red for history, blue for prophecy, yellow for stories of Jesus, etc.) with which to tie the scrolls. If the group has decided to make a Bible book shelf out of match boxes, some committee will have to be appointed for the making of the shelves themselves, (a bookstand large enough to hold sixty-six match boxes), others to make tiny book ends out of soft tin to facilitate dividing the library into sections, others to print tiny labels, such as "History," "Law," "Poetry," etc., to paste on the shelves under the books. All will have to be responsible for a definite number of match boxes with some one person volunteering to bring vari-colored paper with which to cover them.

Asking God's Help:

The teacher might conclude the class with the thought that just as the Hebrews spoke the name of God in reverence, and as the monks wiped their pens before writing His name, we can show our respect for Him by handling His Word aright. To further this thought, the teacher might lead her group to read together II Timothy 2:15 and to pray that they may become "good workmen who need not be ashamed."

WHO WROTE THE BIBLE AND WHEN WAS IT WRITTEN?

Materials for Children's Research:

Biblical Materials: II Peter 1:21; Exodus 17:14; Jeremiah 1:1-2, 6-9; 36:1-2, 4; Nehemiah 1:1; Proverbs 1:1; I Timothy 1:1-2; James 1:1; II Peter 1:1; Jude 1:1; Revelation 1:1-2; Psalms 23, 51, 90 (to discover authorship from headings); I Samuel 16:11-13; 17:34-37 (to discover experience back of Psalm 23)

Supplementary Materials: School texts, such as readers, geographies, arithmetic books, books of science stories, etc.; source books found by committees for background materials

Suggestions for Class Procedure:

Beginning work on the activity chosen, using materials brought by children and incorporating the findings of the preceding session

Thinking again of the fact that our Bible is often called "The Book" or "The Book of Books" to indicate that it is different from all other books ever written

Asking the question, Who could have written a book that is so different? Who wrote our Bible?

*Looking at various class texts to discover their authors

Looking up the Biblical references above, through Revelation 1:1-2; discussing the findings: many different authors, ordinary authors, ordinary men who wrote out of their own experiences but were guided by the Spirit of God; realizing that in this latter fact lies the secret of the uniqueness of the Bible

Glancing at Psalms 23, 51, 90, noting their headings indicating authorship and their nature—poems or hymns of praise and petition

Repeating or reading Psalm 23; then reading I Samuel 16:11-13 and 17:34-37 to discover how David got the ideas expressed in this poem; thinking about why this is the favorite Psalm of most people, of how David, by sharing the experiences he had had with God by writing this Psalm, is still helping people today, almost three thousand years later

Thinking of the second half of the question, When was the Bible written?

*Again looking at texts to discover their dates

Opening their Bibles to the title page to find its date; discovering that the date given there could not be the date of writing; finding out what that date means

*Method used in a demonstration by Miss Elizabeth Longwell, Supervisor of Weekday Religious Education in the State of Virginia.

Trying to find out how long it must have taken to write the Bible by indicating (on the blackboard and in their notebooks): the approximate time span, derived from the facts given below:

Ex. 17:14 indicates that Moses, who lived about 1500 B.C., contributed to the Bible, but the earlier stories of the creation and the flood, were passed down by word of mouth, (Psalm 78:1-7) even before the time of Abraham who lived about 2000 B.C.

Parts of older existing books were included in the Bible, such as the Book of the Wars of the Lord (quoted in Numbers 21:14) and the Book of Jasher (quoted in Joshua 10:13)

David, Solomon, and other writers of the kingdom period, lived about 1000 B.C.

The Psalms, the "Hymn Book of Israel," included songs written between 1500 and 500 B.C.

The books of the prophets were written from about 800 to 400 B.C.

The New Testament books—the stories of Jesus, the story of the early church, and the letters written by Paul, Peter, John and others to help the early Christians live the Life—were not written until a number of years after Jesus' ascension, probably between 45 and 100 A.D.

Continuing study of the theme hymn

Adding to the Bible library the authors and approximate dates of individual books where possible

Expressing, in worship, thanksgiving for our Bible and appreciation of all that went into it through the long years, under the leadership of the Spirit of God

Psalm 23

Silent prayer of thanksgiving for God's word which tells us of His love and care

Theme Hymn

Scripture: II Peter 1:21

Meditation: All through the years when our Bible was being written, there were men who came to know God for themselves, who did not need to guess about Him, because they had "tasted and seen that God is good." Having learned to know Him, having experienced His love and care for them, having received His help

in living according to His will, they could not keep it to themselves, but had to share it with others. Sometimes they wrote of these things because God Himself clearly told them to. Other times they wrote because it was too good to keep; but even then, though they did not realize it, God was working upon their hearts and using them to pass His Word on to us. And because His Spirit was in what they wrote, our Bible today, after more than three thousand years, is still a living Word. In it we still find His Spirit. In it we still hear Him speak to us.

A closing thought: "The Lord is *my* Shepherd, I shall not want."

Summarizing study:

An entire session might profitably be spent in summarizing the study thus far. The Bible book-shelf should be assembled; the set of scrolls, completed; summarizing charts should be made on the board. A *book-shelf drawn,* a *chart* giving a bird's eye view of the various Bible books and their content, a *comment on each book and each group of books as the names of the books of the Bible are read* by the entire class, are all helpful ways of getting the *full-sweep* of Bible content.

Unit II

WHY DOES THE BIBLE EXIST?

(A study of the Making and Preservation of the Bible)

OBJECTIVES:

To help the children understand the steps in the process by which the Bible came into being and attained its present status

To deepen their appreciation of its importance through the years and awaken the desire to help others realize its value by sharing with them the things they are discovering about the Bible

To give the children happy experiences in sharing their findings through interesting class projects

THE QUESTIONS INDICATED IN THE TABLE OF CONTENTS UNDER THIS UNIT WILL HELP THE CHILDREN TO DISCOVER THE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTION, WHY DOES THE BIBLE STILL EXIST?

POSSIBLE UNIFYING ACTIVITIES:

Planning and arranging a window display in a neighborhood store, (e.g., a series of miniature scenes, using dolls, soap or clothespin figures, to depict the various stages in the development of the Book)
Planning and arranging a display in the school library
Making a set of posters for each of the town churches
Planning and giving a chapel program of talks, tableaux, or little plays to share with the rest of the school
Making a large map showing the spread of the Bible from Palestine through Europe to America and back to the Orient

SUGGESTIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL NOTEBOOK WORK:

Outlining the story of the growth of the Bible
Illustrating the course of its development by means of pictures, copies of sample passages from early manuscripts, maps, etc.

THEME HYMN FOR UNIT:

"Faith of Our Fathers"

MEMORY WORK FOR UNIT:
The Books of the Bible

INTRODUCTORY SESSION:

LAUNCHING THE UNIT AS A WHOLE

Setting the Stage:

Materials from American Bible Society on display about the classroom—

Various posters showing the spread of the Bible; e.g., The Book of a Thousand Tongues, a map of the world, showing countries in which the Bible is being distributed, Tyndale translating the Bible, The Bible in the World Today

A browsing table spread with various leaflets telling stories and giving interesting information about the Bible; e.g., "Setting the Bible Loose in Africa," "It Happened Last Year," "A Day with Farag Abdalla," "John 3:16, in many Languages," "The Light Shineth in Darkness," "Sample of Revised Braille" (John 14:6), pictures of old Bibles, actual Bibles in different versions, American Revised, Moffatt's Translation, old family Bibles, the Bible in other languages (perhaps brought in by the children themselves)

Studying the posters, leaflets, and other materials on display

Talking about the facts revealed: The whole Bible has been translated into more than one hundred seventy-five different languages; certain favorite books of the Bible have been translated into about one thousand different tongues; John 3:16 has been translated into more languages than any other single verse.

Thinking about the fact that of all the books in the world today, the Bible is the "best seller"; that it is still being printed in large numbers (During the year 1938 an average of thirteen volumes were issued every minute of every hour, day and night. In 1941, even though the Bible was a book disapproved by the government, there were more copies of it bought in Germany than were bought of "Mein Kampf," a book all were required to read. During 1938-1942, the Bible societies in China could not keep up with the orders sent to them.)

Purposing:

Against the background of the above, the thought might now be introduced that there was a time when there was no Bible and that in its beginning stages, when it first began to take shape, it was very different from *our* Bible, the English Bible as we know it. This would naturally lead to the question, Then how did our Bible come to be? What is its story?

Making Plans for Answering the Question:

Suggesting sources of information concerning the story of how the Bible came to be: the Bible itself, stories in readers, the books already borrowed from the library and from ministers

Talking about possible ways of recording findings and sharing them with others in the school or town and deciding which to make the class project: window display, library display, posters, chapel program, or other suggestions offered by the children themselves. (One group of children, for example, made a group of miniature scenes depicting the story of the Bible's growth, using soap for some figures and clothespins with putty heads and bases for others.)

Looking at the theme hymn for the unit, Faith of Our Fathers, to see how it will fit in with the main thought

Thinking of the first question which should be considered in finding out how our Bible came to be: How were the stories of our Bible first passed on?

Deciding to try to have some answers to this question before the next session

Finishing the Bible Library of the Previous Unit:

Completing unfinished work
Looking it over to find its good and weak points
Talking about the set-up as a whole

Pausing to Worship:

(The leaflet referred to above, "John 3:16 in many languages" may be obtained in large quantities. It would be well to have a sufficient number to give each child a copy. These should be distributed just before beginning the worship period.)

Looking at the leaflet, "John 3:16." Repeating the verse from memory, looking at it in the other languages, listening to the teacher read it in French or German, trying to find the word for God as many times as possible, thinking and talking about why this verse has been translated most often

Giving thanks for the message this verse tells

Reading or singing together the first stanza of "Faith of Our Fathers"

Asking God to guide us as we try to find out more about His Word, and to help us to be true to the "faith of our fathers"

Singing again, "Thy Word is Like a Garden, Lord"

HOW WERE THE STORIES OF THE BIBLE FIRST PASSED ON?

Materials for Children's Research:

Biblical Materials: Psalm 78:1-7; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 8:4-6

Supplementary Materials: Accounts of how the stories of the Bible were handed down by word of mouth; pictures such as Abraham and his family sitting out under the stars, presumably telling the story of creation, or of God's promises, Moses passing on to the people the commandments given him by God; the apostles telling the story of Jesus

Suggestions for Class Procedure:

Talking about how we feel when something important happens to us: how we immediately want to tell it to someone

Reading aloud, in unison, Psalm 78:1-7 in order to find out how people first learned of the wonderful works of God

Listing the wonderful works of God which the following must have heard:

Children in the world's early days from their fathers
Isaac from his father, Abraham
Jacob from his father, Isaac
Joseph and his brothers from their father, Jacob

Choosing one or two favorites from these stories and retelling them

Talking about why these men of old must have liked to tell these stories to their children

Reading aloud, in unison, Matthew 28:18-20 and Acts 8:4-6 to discover how people who had not known Jesus when He was on earth, first learned of His wonderful works

Listing the things each of the following must have heard about Jesus:

Young John Mark from his friend, Peter, the disciple of Jesus
Luke from Mary, the mother of Jesus

Summarizing all the findings of this study in a statement answering the question

Continuing study of "Faith of Our Fathers"

Worshiping through the use of the memory passages, II Peter 1:21, II Timothy 3:16-17, a suitable hymn, the reading of Deuteronomy 8:1-6 (as an example of the thought of the day—Moses telling again to his people the story of God's goodness), and a prayer for help to "walk in His ways"

Beginning the class project, picturing in some concrete form the oral passing on of the stories of the Bible

WHY DID MEN BEGIN TO WRITE THE BIBLE?

Materials for Children's Research

Biblical Materials: Exodus 17:8-14a—Moses commanded to write the record of a battle in a book; 34:1-2, 27—Moses writes the commandments on stone; Jeremiah 36:1-8—Jeremiah writes God's message in a book; Luke 1:1-4—Luke writes to a friend the things he has learned about Jesus; John 20:30—31; 21:25—John tells why he wrote what he did about Jesus; I John 2:1; 5:13—The early preachers write letters to people in their churches.

Supplementary Materials: Pictures of Moses, Jeremiah, Luke, John, or any other Bible writers; pictures of stone tablets; pictures of Hebrews writing on scrolls;* pictures of fragments of papyrus on which have been found "Sayings of Jesus" (See cut in J. Paterson Smyth's "The Bible in the Making," page 180)

Suggesting the Question:

With the previous session as a background, the children can be led to make conjectures as to possible reasons for the writing of stories which for so long had been passed on by word of mouth.

Going to the Bible to Answer the Question: "Why Did Men Begin to Write the Bible?":

It would be well to lead the children to work individually with Bibles and notebooks in an attempt to discover the answers to the questions below (Questions, with the references in which the answers can be found, should be written on the board. The children should understand that with the answering of these supplementary questions will come the information needed for the answering of the main query. They should not be allowed to feel that this study is a hard duty but should be led to approach it with the attitude of adventure experienced by explorers.):

Why do you think Moses wrote down the story of the Israelites' victory? Exodus 17:8-14a

Why did Moses write the commandments on stone? Exodus 34:1-2, 27

Why did Jeremiah, in prison, write God's message in a book? Jeremiah 36:1-8

Why did Luke write to his friend, Theophilus, the things he knew about Jesus? Luke 1:1-4

Why did John write what he did about Jesus? John 20:30-31; 21:25

*A Sefer Torah ("Scroll of the Law"), 5 inches—40c; 7½ inches—50c, may be bought from Bloch Publishing Co., 31 W. 31st St., New York.

Why did the early preachers write letters to the people in their churches? I John 2:1; 5:13

When the children have completed their list of discoveries, they will probably enjoy sharing their results with each other and writing common conclusions on the board. With this list of reasons before them, showing why specific portions of the Bible were written, it should not be difficult for the children, under the teacher's direction, to formulate a statement summarizing these reasons as an answer to the question, "Why did men begin to write the Bible?"

Suggestions for Worship:

In order to summarize the answer to their question in Bible words and to feel that back of all this human activity of writing there moved the Spirit of God, the children should read together II Peter 1:21. ("Prophecy" should be understood to mean, here, the entire body of Scripture.)

After a period of prayer, the group might join in singing some hymn of God's word: e.g., "I Love to Tell the Story," "Faith of Our Fathers" or "Thy Word is Like a Garden, Lord."

Suggestions for the Class Project:

The incorporation of this answer in the class activity should not be difficult. (The group of children mentioned above, whose project was that of making a series of miniature scenes telling the story of the Bible, pictured this answer in two scenes. One showed a soap figure of Moses with the commandments in his hand coming down a painted-clay Mt. Sinai which was topped with a cotton cloud made dark with coal dust. The other showed a soap Moses sitting in front of a brown cloth tent writing upon a soap scroll. The background was made of rough stone to simulate mountains.)

HOW HAS THE BIBLE BEEN KEPT SAFE THROUGH ALL THESE YEARS?

Material for Children's Research:

Biblical Material: Deuteronomy 31:24-26—Moses put his writings, the Book of the Law, in safekeeping; II Kings 22:1-23:14—The Book of the Law is lost and found again; Jeremiah 36:9-32—A book is burned and re-written

Supplementary Materials: Pictures of the ark of the covenant, of the finding of the Book of the Law in the Temple, and of Jeremiah dictating to Baruch

Asking the Question:

This question can easily be raised in the children's minds by brief reference to the thousands of years which have passed since most of the books of the Bible were written, by brief comment upon how difficult it is to keep old letters and books for any very great length of time, by wonderment about the fact that our Bible is in our hands today.

Seeking for an Answer:

By leading the class to the first three references listed above, they will readily learn the story of one of the oldest sections of the Bible, the Book of the Law. They will also see how important it was that the book be kept safe for the people. The group may be interested to know that the finding of the Book took place about one thousand years after its first placement in the ark for safekeeping.

The story of Jeremiah might well be found in the Bibles by the children and, at the same time, be told to them by the teacher.

THE ROLL OF THE BOOK

Jeremiah was hiding, not because he had committed a crime, but simply because he had preached God's Word to the people and they were about to kill him. With him was only one man, Baruch, his secretary, to go back and forth for him to the outside world. Jeremiah was discouraged. Had all his preaching been for nothing? He hadn't really wanted to do it in the first place. He had wanted to stay on his farm and tend his sycamore trees. He hadn't wanted to come into this huge city of Jerusalem. But God had called him. God had said, "Go, cry in the ears of Jerusalem and say, 'I remember the days when you loved me and followed in my ways. But now, you have departed from me and have built idols to foreign gods.

You used to trust me; but now you have put your trust in the armies of foreign nations. You used to try to walk in my ways of righteousness; but now you have broken your word to other nations and have lied to other peoples. If you keep up your evil ways you will surely be destroyed by the very nations you trust and cheat. But if you hearken to my voice and change your ways surely I will be to you a Father as I was in the days of your youth; and I will save you from your enemies.' "

And so Jeremiah had gone to the people with God's message. Most of the people had laughed at him; but the young King Josiah had listened and acted on his words. With Josiah he had worked to bring the people back to God. Even though the rulers and the priests laughed at him, a farmer from Anathoth, the king had been on his side and he had felt encouraged.

But the king had died. In the battle of Carchemish he had been killed by the armies of Egypt, and a new king reigned in his stead. Although this king was Josiah's son, he was very different from his father. As soon as he had ascended the throne, Jeremiah was arrested in the temple court, arrested for saying that the king and the people would suffer if they did not repent, arrested and accused of being worthy of death. He knew that it was only the goodness of God that had kept them from killing him.

In spite of their plots against him, Jeremiah had kept on preaching. Somehow he must make the people listen to God. If they did not listen, they would surely all be killed or carried away into captivity and this beautiful city they all loved would be torn down. But one day, while he was preaching in the temple court, Pashur, the son of a priest, had slapped him across the mouth and had him put in stocks. There he had sat, all night, upon the ground with his feet and hands held straight before him locked in the holes of the board in front. It was the punishment given to scoundrels and thieves! He remembered what an uncomfortable night it had been. He had decided that night that he would never preach again; but when, the next day, he had been released he found that he could not keep still. God's words were like a burning fire shut up in his heart. He spoke them again. And here he was in hiding. They had come so near killing him that he had had to flee. What would come of it all? Had all these twenty-two years of preaching been for nothing? Everyone would forget what he had said. The king, unwarned by his messages, would go on in his wrong ways. The people would not know that even though they might be carried away God would not stop loving them; that He would bring them back to their homes again; that sometime in the far-off years He would

bring a Saviour to the world. He had the messages of God that the people needed; and here he was unable to preach.

But even as he sat there thinking, he heard God's voice again in his heart, "Jeremiah, take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken . . . It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin."

Jeremiah was glad. Surely, this was a way out. Why hadn't he thought of it before? Here, with the help of Baruch, his secretary, he could write down the best sermons he had preached, the chief messages of God which he had received. Here, he could put into a book all the things God wanted to say to the people, even though he himself could not get out to preach. Baruch could take them into the temple courts when all the people were gathered together on their feast-day. There all the people could hear the Words of God and, hearing, would have a chance to change their ways.

He set to his new task with a will. As Jeremiah thought again through all the messages God had given Him for the people, he spoke them to Baruch and Baruch wrote them upon the scroll. My, but it was a great task. Jeremiah was tired of speaking at times, and Baruch of writing. But they had the messages of twenty-two years to write in that book. They must work on.

At last, it was finished. It had taken them almost a year to write; but it was done. "I still can't go to the people," said Jeremiah. "You take it and read it to them."

So Baruch went to the temple courts where the people were holding their religious ceremonies. There, he went to the room of a scribe named Gemariah, a room in the upper court overlooking the crowds below. Here, he took his seat in the door of the room and began to read aloud from the scroll. People stopped to listen. Could the messages be true? Would God really let them fall into the hands of their enemies? Possibly because they were afraid, or possibly because Baruch did not stir them with his reading as Jeremiah had with his speaking, the people did nothing against him.

But the son of Gemariah, from whose door Baruch had spoken, ran to his father who was attending a council of the princes, and told him of what had just happened. All the princes agreed that they should hear the words of the book for themselves; so they sent a messenger, Jehudi, to Baruch with the words, "Take in your hand the roll that you have just read to the people, and come."

When Baruch came into their council room, they said, "Sit down and read it in our ears."

So Baruch read. As he read, the princes became frightened. "Surely the king should hear these words," they said.

But they turned to Baruch with a question: "Tell us," they asked, "How were all these words written?"

"Jeremiah pronounced all these words to me with his mouth," answered Baruch, "and I wrote them with ink in the book."

Then said the princes unto him, "Surely, trouble will come to you both from this. We will take the book to the king. But you go. Go to Jeremiah. Both of you must flee to a place of safety known to no one." So Baruch went back to Jeremiah, leaving the book with the princes.

As soon as Baruch had departed, they went to the king and told him of all that had happened. Now the king was sitting in his winter house warming himself by a fire-pan of charcoals; and when he heard the princes' words, he said, "Go bring the book and read it to me."

So Jehudi went and fetched the book and brought it to the king. Fearfully, he began to read. When he had read three columns, the king reached out his hand and snatched the book from him. "This is what that deserves," he said as he cut off, with his penknife, the part of the scroll that had just been read. "This is what that deserves!" And he threw it in the fire.

The princes stood by watching the words of God burn brightly. Then the king said, "Go on."

Jehudi continued for three or four more columns but was again interrupted by the king. Again the book was snatched from his hands. Again the part which had been read was cut off with the knife and thrown into the fire. "Go on," said the king.

And so the reading continued with the king, every few moments, tossing into the flames the very words of God, which Jeremiah and Baruch had spent a whole year writing. By the time the reading was over, the entire book had been burned.

"Go arrest Jeremiah and Baruch," demanded the king.

But Jeremiah and Baruch were nowhere to be found.

Somehow, however, they heard of the burning of their scroll and they indeed were distressed. A year's work burned! God's words destroyed! No one would remember the warnings of God. People would forget, when they were at last in captivity, that He loved them.

But the word of God came again to Jeremiah, saying, "Take thee again another roll, and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll, and add a message to Jehoiakim, king of Judah."

And so the work was begun a second time. And Baruch wrote all the words of Jeremiah which the king had burned; and there were added besides them many like words.

So God's messages were again written out for people to read. But this time they were not left to the destruction of evil men, but carefully guarded and kept. Today, in our Bibles, we have the words of God which Jeremiah spoke.

"From Wonder to Worship":

The story of Jeremiah and the roll of the book should leave the children filled with wonder at the thought of God's hand in the preservation of the Bible.

Their wonderment may easily be turned into worship. With prayers of thanksgiving for the Bible, the singing of hymns such as "Faith of Our Fathers," and the unison reading of II Peter 1:21, the climax of the whole session may be reached.

Possible Activities:

The scroll in the ark, the finding of the scroll, Jeremiah dictating to Baruch, or the burning of the Book would all lend themselves to picturing on posters, in soap carvings, or through tableaux. The children will have to decide which scene or scenes they wish to depict and choose a committee to carry out their plans.

WHAT HAS BEEN HAPPENING TO THE BIBLE SINCE IT WAS COMPLETED?

A Posible Procedure:

As most of the children in the class will probably not own books in which can be found the story of how our Bible came to be written in English and in other modern languages, the teacher will have to supply most of the information on this subject. She should draw on the children's knowledge as far as possible and stimulate them to do research in their own libraries, in Bible book-sets such as "The Master Library," and in their own school history books.

The following brief outline of the history of the Bible may be used as an illustrated talk, the teacher telling the story, drawing illustrations on the board, and showing pictures she has collected. It may well culminate in brief worship as suggested at its close.

OUR BIBLE THROUGH THE YEARS

Our word "volume" comes from a Latin word meaning "something rolled up." All of the books of the Bible were, at first, "rolled up" and written in Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek. The Old Testament was written in Hebrew. In some Bibles you can discover what all the letters of the Hebrew alphabet look like by turning to the headings of Psalm 119; in all Bibles you will find the names of the Hebrew letters. You might like to draw a picture of a scroll in your notebooks and write these letters on it from right to left.

Scrolls were made of papyrus, a writing material made from reeds, parchment, sheep or goat skin, attached to rollers.

Most of the New Testament books were written in Greek. Greek is written right straight along without any break for words. How would you like to read a book written in this manner?

FORGODSOLOVEDTHEWORLDTHATHEGAVE
HISONLYBEGOTTENSONTHATWHOSOEVER
BELIEVETHINHIMSHOULDNOTPERISHBUT
HAVEEVERLASTINGLIFE

When the church spread to Italy, the Bible was naturally translated into Latin. The best translation was made by St. Jerome about 385 A.D. and is called the "Latin Vulgate." Monks, religious men living together in monasteries, in order to worship and serve God better, wanted copies of this Latin Bible. In order to have a copy they could keep, they had to copy it, word for word, on large parchment pages. Because the book they were copying was so important, they prayed before they began and worked carefully and accurately, making each page as beautiful as possible. Whenever they

came to the name of God, they would stop and wipe their pens and no one, not even the king, could stop their finishing the name when once they had started. You will like to look at illustrations showing the kind of pictures and letters they used. The finest colors imaginable were used to make the pages beautiful. (Copies of these pages can often be found in encyclopedias and dictionaries.)

The Bible was next sung. About six hundred years after Christ, Caedmon, a laborer employed in a monastery in England, started singing bits of the Bible as they were translated into his own language by the monks. The songs he sang became so popular that they were written down for use by others. So the first parts of the Bible to be written in English were written as songs!

Sixty-five years after this, a monk called "The Admirable Bede" translated the Gospel of John for his friends. More than one hundred years later, the good King Alfred started to translate the Psalms and laws of the Bible for his people. He died before he finished, but because of his work the Ten Commandments are a part of the laws of England. This is the way they looked in the old English:*

"Ne lufa thu othre godas ofer me . . .

Ara thinum faeder and thinre meder tha the Drithen sealde the, that thu sy thy leng libbende on eorthan.

No slea thu.
Ne stala thu.
Ne like thu dearnunga.
Ne saege thu lease gewitness with thinim nehstan.
Ne wilna thu thines nehstan yifes mid unrihte."

In 1378, Wyclif translated the Bible so that it could be read in the language of the common people of England. The common people of his day understood language like this:*

"And Jhesu biheld, and seide, A man came down from Jerusalem into Jerico, and fel among theves, and thei robbiden hym, and woundiden hym, and wente awei, and leften the man half alyve. And it bifel that a prest cam doun the same weie, and passide forth, whanne he hadde seyn hym. Also a dekene, when he was bisides the place, and saw hym, passide forth. But a Samaritan, boynge the weie, came bisides hym; and he saw hym, and had suth on hymn; and cam to hym, and bound together his woundis, and helde in oyle and wynne, and laide hym on his beast, and ledde hym to an ostrie (inn), and dyd the cure of hym."

But even after Wyclif had translated the Bible, very few people

*John T. Faris, *The Romance of the English Bible.*

could buy it, for each copy was written by hand on skins and cost about two hundred dollars. When you learn that a priest's salary for a year was twenty-five dollars and a pig could be bought for twelve cents, you can see how expensive this really was. Many who could not own copies paid those who did to let them read it. One man gave a load of hay in order to read another man's Bible for an hour a day for a number of days. Soon a company of men called "Lollards" began going about the country teaching the Bible to the people who crowded to learn. But the leaders of the church did not like this. "The people will learn too much," they said. "Then they will know that we are sometimes in the wrong." And so many of Wyclif's Bibles were burned and when he died his body was burned and the ashes thrown into the River Swift. So now, with the English Bibles burned and the Lollards forbidden to travel, people who wanted to read the Bible had to go to the churches and get what they could from a Latin Bible chained to the desk.

You will remember reading in your readers about how the printing press was invented in 1450. Dreadful things were happening in England at this time. The Church was in a sorry state. Instead of living as children of God, her priests and leaders were sinning against God, eager for wealth and power, doing many wrong things, and failing to teach and care for the poor. Because of this, the people of the land were living in misery, suffering from much injustice, and being kept in ignorance. And the Bible, through which they could have found help, was kept chained! Fortunately, there were a few priests and leaders who were faithful to God, even daring to speak out against the wrongdoing in the Church, especially against the chained Bible. Thanks to Gutenberg's printing press and a courageous man named Tyndale, the New Testament was retranslated and, in spite of persecution and burning, six thousand copies of the Bible were scattered throughout England for the people to read and study for themselves.

After this, many other translations were made by people who loved God's word and wanted to put it into words that all could understand. But as some people had one Bible translation and some another, there was some confusion as to which was right. In 1607, King James called together the finest scholars of the land to make a new translation. In 1611, it was finished. What do you find on the title page of your King James Bible which shows you what they did to make theirs the best translation that had yet been made?

But our language keeps on changing. If you look through your King James Bible, you will find many words which we no longer use in the same way today. In 1901, a new American revision was

made. If you secure a copy of this newer Bible and read a part of the introduction, you can learn the story of how it came to be. In order to see the changes the American revisers made, take the two Bibles and compare the two versions of I Corinthians 13, the manner in which the Psalms are printed, the way in which paragraphs are arranged. Which translation is easier for you to understand?

Many individuals have tried to translate the Bible into the kind of language we use today. Moffatt's, Goodspeed's and Weymouth's translations are very good and very helpful but are in some instances not so true to the original words of Bible writers as are the translations made by the groups of people who worked together on the "King James" and "American Revised" version. You will probably like to collect and compare these versions.

After thinking of the wonderful way in which God has kept His word safe and given it to us in our own language, would you not like to pray a prayer of thanksgiving for it?

Planning Activities:

After the illustrated talk and the worship, the children will be eager to add to their concrete picturing of the story of the Bible some outstanding scenes from the history just recounted. The teacher will have to guard against their undertaking more than they can finish, but will have no difficulty in helping them discover scenes easily pictured. (The group of children, mentioned previously, who made miniature scenes of the story of our Bible, created clothespin Lollards with putty heads and feet, dressed in long, black cassocks and white robes. They made a soap Tyndale tied to a soap stake, piled around him tiny soap Bibles whose covers had been painted black and the edges of whose pages gleamed with gilt, and stood about him a group of soap men carrying soap torches and logs. They made a full-Ivory-soap-cake Bible showing the embossed cover, metal corners, and heavy lock. A dime-store gold chain was suspended from its back. A wooden model of the Gutenberg printing press, lined with tin foil, was copied from a history book. A modern missionary, sitting by a table writing on a typewriter the words he was translating from a Bible opened before him, was carved from soap and painted in natural-looking colors.) When the scenes have been decided upon and committees for their execution selected, the children should meet in their committee groups to complete plans.

An activity which would add greatly to the interest and value of this unit would be that of collecting old Bibles, pictures of old manuscripts, and Bibles written in foreign tongues. (A free exhibit

of mounted pages of modern Bible translations with brief stories concerning their translators may be ordered from any regional office of the American Bible Society and kept for two weeks.)

It would be well, during this session, to begin plans for the final showing of the exhibit of miniature scenes or series of tableaux the group has been working upon. If the unit ends on or near Thanksgiving, the element of giving thanks for our Bible would fit in well with the closing program.

Suggestions for Further Sessions:

Although it would not be wise to undertake any new avenues of research and discovery during the next few weeks, it would be well to emphasize in worship the high spots of this session's story. The worship services outlined below will be suggestive. As the next few sessions will be needed to finish up the class project, no new activities should be begun.

WORSHIP No. 1:

Theme Verse: Psalm 119:160

Possible Hymns: Thy Word is Like a Garden, Lord
Faith of Our Fathers
Our God, Our Help in Ages Past

A Story

THE BIBLE THAT COULD NOT BE BURNED*

Pierre looked furtively around the dark church. As no one was about, he crept quietly up the aisle and stood hesitantly before the great Book chained on a stand at the front. He did want one look into this Book. He did want to learn more of what was right and what was wrong. He did want to know so many things that the priests told him he was not able to understand. He opened the Book and turned its heavy sheepskin pages. Yes, it was as the priest had said, he could not understand it. Why was it that God had left his message in Latin when he, Pierre, could only read a little French? Disappointed, he left the church. Just outside he ran into a group of excited men.

"The bishop is angry with the priests for the way in which they have neglected this church for their drunken parties in the city," said one man.

"They say that the bishop has many new ideas," said another.

*Agnes P. Junkin. Reprinted by permission of the Presbyterian Committee of Publication, Richmond, Va.

"He went to that new printing press in Antwerp and secured a copy of the Bible that a man by the name of Lefevre has translated into French. He says that all Frenchmen should own a Bible written in their own language, that if they did they would learn how to live as children of God.

"And to think that the bishop himself is on his way to Meaux and will preach tomorrow morning. Let us spread the news abroad. All the people in Meaux will wish to see and hear him."

Pierre rushed home with the news. "Mama," he cried, "you must get out your fine dress, and come with me to church tomorrow. The Bishop is coming. And, Mama, did you know that the Bible has been translated into French? Do you think that I shall ever get to read it?"

"No, son; you are just a peasant lad," responded his mother. "Why you can't even go to the schools for learning. Such things are only for the rich."

"But," answered Pierre, "I have already learned to read a little French from the mad potter, Palissy. Whenever he spends a night in town, he teaches me a little more. Even if the schools are just for the rich, I have a few chances to learn."

The next evening, Pierre could hardly sleep. The Bishop had come and had preached a wonderful sermon on the words of the nineteenth Psalm, "The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple." He had said that God's Word was for everyone, the poor as well as the rich, the uneducated as well as the educated; that it was a great teacher, sent from God to show men how to live as children of God. At the end of the service he had given away copies of the four Gospels written in French. Pierre took his copy to bed with him, so very precious it was. All day he had been reading it and discussing it with the townspeople.

"Christ was a poor man," thought Pierre, " a poor man, but a free and powerful man. He talked to God directly, not through priests. Why cannot I?" With these thoughts whirling through his mind, he fell asleep.

Days passed and the people went on about their work, but the excitement did not subside.

"I am not going to curse any more," said one man. "Christ said it was wrong."

"And did you know that anger is as wrong as murder?" said another.

"No man is our ruler except God," said yet another. "He only can forgive sin. No human ruler has the right to make us break divine laws."

"Oh, I want to be more like Christ," sighed another.

Soon bad plays, gambling, and immodest dress disappeared from the town of Meaux. Lawsuits became fewer, for the people, filled with a knowledge of the right and with Christ's spirit of love, settled questions in a quiet way among themselves. Crime disappeared. Sunday was a day of rejoicing to all. Groups of working people gathered in the fields to sing Psalms and to teach each other the new things they had learned. The people of Meaux were happier than they had ever been before.

Before long, however, news came that neighboring towns had been raided by the priests; homes had been broken into, Bibles burned, and printers and readers of God's Word punished. The heads of the church and the rulers of the land did not approve of the spread of the Bible which brought such a spirit of freedom among the common people. If the people could learn for themselves maybe they would disagree with the priests. And so these wicked leaders decided to do away with French Bibles.

When the townsmen of Meaux heard this news, they gathered their young people together. "You," they said, "have very retentive memories. We are going to assign to each of you certain chapters of the Gospels. You are to memorize these chapters so that if our Bibles are taken from us we may come to you for the Word of Truth."

Pierre came home thrilled. "I am to learn the first six chapters of Matthew," he told his mother. "You must hear me recite them and help me to learn them perfectly. They can burn our Bibles, but if we have the Word in our hearts they cannot take it from us." And so he enthusiastically learned his part.

The persecution did break out in Meaux, and all Bibles were burned in the public square. As soon as the priests were gone, the citizens of the town gathered themselves together. And there each young person recited to a scribe the portion of the Book he had learned. "We can still know God's Word and God's will for us," they cried exultantly. "We have His Book in the midst of us. It cannot be destroyed."

Even though all the copies of the Bible in Meaux were burned, the Bible itself could not be destroyed because it was in the hearts and minds of the people.

If all the Bibles in the world today were destroyed, most of the words of the Bible could be written down again by the combined efforts of Christian people.

If my Bible were destroyed, how much of it would I still have in my heart?

Prayer:

Thanksgiving for God's protection of His Word
Asking help in making the Bible a part of our lives

WORSHIP No. 2:

Theme Verse: Psalm 19:8, 10
Possible Hymns: Faith of Our Fathers
Our God, Our Help in Ages Past
Thy Word is Like a Garden, Lord
God of Our Fathers

A Story:

THE BIBLE THAT COULD NOT BE STOPPED

The debate was on: The Pope's laws—or God's laws? The rules of the Church—or of the Bible? The two debaters were getting more and more excited.

"We had better be without God's laws than the Pope's," said the one.

That was more than William Tyndale could stand. Now he knew what he must do; and he rose to face his opponent.

"I defy the Pope and all his laws," he replied indignantly. "And if God spare me I will one day make the boy that drives the plough in England to know more of Scripture than thou dost!"

That was a daring vow to make; but it was a vow and Tyndale intended to keep it. It would not be easy, he knew. The old decree still stood as it had stood a hundred years and more: "It is forbidden that any person should translate the Bible without special permission." Yet he must translate the Bible! How else could the boy that drives the plough understand it, since he did not know Latin and the English of Wyclif's Bible was already hard to understand? And how could he afford to buy it when it cost so much?

More and more Tyndale thought about it and more and more and more he knew that he *must* translate the Bible, especially the New Testament, and have it printed so that the poor could understand and buy it. Rumors had come from Germany that Martin Luther had translated and printed the Bible in German for the common people of his land. Why should not the people of England have it in their own tongue?

At last Tyndale thought of a plan. As soon as he could, he went to London to see the Bishop of London. "For," he thought, " it may

be that he will grant me the special permission I need. And then I can begin work, living in his house and working under his protection." But disappointment awaited him.

"No," said the Bishop. "I cannot take you in. My house is full and I already have more than I can well feed. You had better look elsewhere in London for help."

But Tyndale would not give in. Surely there must be someone who would help him! So he kept on trying and at last he found a wealthy merchant, Humphrey Monmouth, who was willing to take him in. For almost a year he lived in Monmouth's home, working on his translation and hoping the Church would give him permission to have it printed. But the Bishops did not want an open Bible for the people and the publishers would not print it without permission. Tyndale loved his country and his people but finally he saw that if he were to keep his vow, he would have to leave the homeland he loved and go to a strange country.

It was in 1524 that, with money provided by his friends, he left England to go to Germany. There, in the city of Hamburg, in hiding because he knew his life was in danger, and with little money to provide for his needs, Tyndale lived and continued his translating. After hard and steady work it was ready for the printer. With a thankful heart, Tyndale succeeded in getting his manuscript secretly to Cologne where the printer began to set it up.

Those must have been happy days for Tyndale. Even though he was an exile from home, even though his life was constantly in danger, and even though there were still some problems ahead, it looked as though his dream might soon come true. And then, one day, the blow fell!

A knock at his door—a whispered message. "Your secret is known! A priest has found it out and warned the Bishops in England!" Half beside himself, Tyndale rushed to the printer's with but one thought in mind—"The translation must be saved!" Seizing all the sheets he could get, he hurriedly left Cologne and managed to get to Worms, another town in Germany. Here at last he was going to accomplish his task! The New Testament, from beginning to end, was printed in English! More than that, to safeguard it, for he knew the Bishops might destroy those books, he had another smaller set printed.

Now to get them back to England and into the hands of the people! But how to do it? To send them openly would be to have them destroyed. Instead, Tyndale hid them in as many different ways as he could find—in bales of cloth, in sacks of flour, in barrels, and in all kinds of other secret ways.

Across the English Channel officers were guarding every port, watching for Tyndale's New Testament. The Bishops knew that if the printed books got into the country, everyone would be buying them, for printed books could be sold at a much cheaper price than those copied by hand. So they watched carefully and in spite of the many hiding places, they succeeded in finding thousands of the books. "Let them be burned," was the order, "as a burnt-offering most pleasing to Almighty God."

So thousands of the books were burned. But for every thousand burned, another thousand was sent over, for Tyndale was not discouraged. In fact, it was just what he had expected and he even said he expected them some day to burn him also. More and more copies he had printed and more and more copies succeeded in getting by the guards at the English ports. Something, the Bishops decided, must be done about it, no matter what the cost.

It was just about this time that Tyndale's funds were running low and he wondered if he would have to stop printing the New Testament. One day his friend, Augustine Pakington, a merchant who sometimes came to Germany for trading, visited Tyndale at his home.

"I have found someone who will buy your New Testament books," said Pakington.

"Who?" asked Tyndale.

"The Bishop of London."

"The Bishop of London! But surely he would only buy them to burn them."

"What of it? He will burn them anyway, so you may as well let him pay you for them. And then you will have the money to pay for printing more books."

Then Pakington went on to tell Tyndale how the Bishop of London had come to him, not knowing he and Tyndale were friends, and asked him to try to buy up all the copies Tyndale hadn't sold. The bargain was made. The Bishop paid for the books. Tyndale received the money. More New Testaments were printed and smuggled into England. As the days and months went by, it became more and more evident that the "People's Bible" could no longer be stopped. The people had begun reading it and they would not give it up. Tyndale had kept his vow and the boy who drove the plough had a chance to know the Word of God for himself.

All of this had cost Tyndale much. For this he had cheerfully given up everything; and now at the end he had to pay the greatest

price of all—he had to lay down his life. Tricked by a false friend, thrown into prison, he was condemned to die. In 1536, on the 6th of October, William Tyndale was tied to a stake, strangled to death, and then burned to ashes. And in the face of death, he still had but one thought, that his people should have the Word. "Lord," he prayed, "Open the King of England's eyes."

Thoughts for Meditation:

People in Wyclif's day were willing to pay two hundred dollars for a copy of the Bible when average salaries were only about twenty-five dollars a year.

Men used to pay for the privilege of reading the Bible for short periods. One man gave a load of hay in exchange for the chance to read another's man's Bible for one hour a day for a number of days.

Tyndale was willing to give his life that others might be able to read the Bible.

Psalm 19:8, 10

Prayer: Thanking God for the men who gave so much that we might have the Bible

Asking that we may be willing to give in order that people in mission lands may have the Bible in their own languages

WORSHIP No. 3:

Theme Verse: Isaiah 11:9b

Possible Hymns: I Love to Tell the Story
We've a Story to Tell to the Nations
Christ for the World We Sing

Suggestion: From some missionary magazine or Bible Society leaflet a story of the work of colporteurs may be told, showing how the Bible is still being distributed throughout the world.

Materials for a Browsing Table:

Posters and leaflets from the American Bible Society: posters such as "Half the World Still Lives in Bibleless Homes,"

"Each in His Own Tongue," "The Colporteur," and leaflets on Bible distribution such as "A Day with Farag Abdalla"

Books of missionary stories

Thoughts for Meditation:

The Bible has been translated into over a thousand tongues.

Three printing presses were running night and day in China during 1938 but could not keep up with the orders for Bibles and Bible portions which came in.

There are still people in the world who do not have the whole Bible translated into their own language.

It costs money to translate and set up the type for new Bibles.

The American Bible Society distributes free Bibles to many people all around the world who cannot afford to buy them.

Half the people of the world still have no Bible in their homes.

Offering To be sent to the American Bible Society for Bible distribution in foreign lands

"The Packman's Wares" in the supplement, is a good story of the distribution of the Bible today.

Prayer: Thanking God for the Bible in our own tongue and asking Him to use the gifts which have been given for the further spread of His Word

Unit III

HOW DOES THE FAVORITE STORY OF THE BIBLE HELP ALL KINDS OF PEOPLE IN THE WORLD?

(A Study of the Influence of the Christmas Message on All Types of People)

OBJECTIVES:

To give to children a vision of Christian fellowship throughout the world: in the family, among rich and poor, and among people of all races

To develop in them a feeling of friendliness and good will toward people of all walks of life; to arouse a sense of responsibility for using their Bibles in their homes and for sharing it with others

To give them opportunities to share Christmas love in their homes, with people of different social strata, and with people of other races in all parts of the world

THE QUESTIONS INDICATED IN THE TABLE OF CONTENTS UNDER THIS UNIT WILL HELP THE CHILDREN TO DISCOVER THE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTION, HOW DOES THE FAVORITE STORY OF THE BIBLE HELP ALL KINDS OF PEOPLE IN THE WORLD?

POSSIBLE UNIFYING ACTIVITIES:

Continuing the activity begun in Unit II, by making for its final scene, a creche with figures representing people of various lands kneeling before the manger

Undertaking some plan of earning or raising money to buy Bibles for individuals or groups who have none (e.g., single copies for personal friends, a large-print Bible for a primary department of a church school, one or more Braille Bibles for the blind, "penny gospels" in other languages to be distributed in other lands through the American Bible Society.) N.B. Whatever funds are raised by the children as a group should be spent, not directly, but through the proper church or interchurch organizations

Singing carols in the hall at recess

Making scrapbooks of Christmas pictures to send to a mission school or children's ward of a hospital, or some sick member of the class

SUGGESTIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL NOTEBOOK WORK:

Collecting and mounting old Christmas cards showing the nativity scene

Making pages of Christmas in Italy, in Germany, etc., describing Christmas customs in each land

Recording conclusions reached in each session

THEME HYMN FOR UNIT:

"Silent Night, Holy Night"

UNIT MEMORY VERSES:

Matthew 2:10-11
Luke 2:8-20

LAUNCHING THE UNIT AND ANSWERING THE QUESTION, HOW DOES THE STORY OF CHRISTMAS MAKE US ACT TOWARD MEMBERS OF OUR OWN FAMILIES?

Launching the Unit:

Since there will undoubtedly be signs of Christmas about town at this time and since the children will already have begun to face their own Christmas problems of "What shall I give?" "To whom shall I give?", and "What shall I get?" it will not be difficult to open their eyes to the usually unfaced Christmas problems of "How are my before-Christmas activities fitting in with family plans?", "Are there people near me who will not have a Christmas?", "Do I really feel Christmas love toward people in other countries?"

Interest in some Christmas project will probably grow out of one of the stories told. The determination to carry on Christmas activities with the family, the decision to make a manger scene, the desire to study Christmas customs of other nations, or the desire to assist people of other nationalities or of unfortunate circumstances to have a happy Christmas might grow out of the story "The Magic Gift." The needs of the members of the class and the interests of the children will, of course, determine the activity. (It is interesting to note that the Italian custom of making a crêche at Christmas time was begun by St. Francis of Assisi.)

Answering the question, How Does the Story of Christmas Make Us Act Toward Members of Our Own Families?

Materials for Children's Research:

Biblical Materials:

Luke 2:1-7, 40-52—The Son of God lived in a home as do we; Philippians 4:8-9—Thoughts which bring peace to our homes; John 14:23—Jesus will live in the homes of those who love and obey Him.

Supplementary Materials:

Christmas pictures, pictures of people in homes doing things together, Christmas songs and poems, Christmas prayers for the home, stories of happy homes at Christmas time

Possible Activities:

Listening to the story, "The Magic Gift"

Discussing the story, "The Magic Gift"

What were the members of the Marotta family like after Mr. Marotta lost his job and before they made their Christmas

gift for the settlement house? Beppo, Lucy, Arthur, Angelo, Carlotta, Mrs. Marotta, Mr. Marotta.

In what way did each member of the family change as he thought of the Christmas story and worked on the Christmas gift?

What brought about this change? (Discuss Biblical materials listed.)

What did Mr. Marotta mean when he said, "Our family is beautiful now because the Christ Child is here?" In what ways had each member of the family become more like the Christ Child? What had made the Marotta family unhappy? What made them happy again? Which makes us most happy —thinking of ourselves or thinking of others? Why do we think of others at Christmas time?

Talking of Italian customs

Looking at ourselves:

Let each member of the class write a brief sketch of his own family for no one but himself to read.

Next let each person list ways in which he could make his family more like Jesus.

Talk of what commandments of Jesus we must obey in our homes to make Him want to live in them this Christmas.

Talk of Christmas projects which can be undertaken by families as a whole: a family gift for a neighbor, home decorating for Christmas, a home party, a home worship service, a home dramatization of the Christmas story, etc.

Let each member of the class write a brief sketch of the way he would like to have his family be when Christmas is over.

Memorizing the Christmas story

Recording class findings in personal note-books

Deciding on class project, probably the making of a crêche, and planning it in detail

A Story:

THE MAGIC GIFT*

Mr. Marotta dreaded to break the news to his family. Six weeks before Christmas, and he was laid off, for the first time in his life! Of course the factory would open again in the spring, but what

*Based upon the story, "A Gift from La Befana," from *So Gracious Is the Time,* by Annie B. Kerr.

would they do for a living all those days in between? And with Christmas almost here! Mr. Marotta began thinking about his family. He hated to ask his son for money; but Beppo's earnings would be the only way to keep the family going. Beppo was twenty-one and he liked to have his own way about everything. He would quarrel about having to give up his money to buy groceries and pay rent. Then there was fifteen-year-old Lucy who was ashamed of being Italian by birth. She was asking only yesterday for a new dress and shoes so she could look like the American girls in the high school. And twelve-year-old Arthur, who so loved to go to the movies—and then poor little Angelo—it would be hardest of all to disappoint Angelo at Christmas, for Angelo was lame, and all the family especially loved him. The only comfort Mr. Marotta had was in thinking of his wife and his oldest daughter, Carlotta. He knew they would take the bad news in the same quiet way and do their best to help the rest of the family. But as he thought again of the rest of his family, Mr. Marotta almost wished that there would be no Christmas this year.

And Mr. Marotta was right in sensing trouble when he told his family the sad news. Almost from the first day, things seemed to go wrong; and every day the situation seemed to grow worse.

Since his money was now feeding the family, Beppo grew very bossy and tried to order everyone around. He and Lucy quarreled constantly, it seemed. Beppo told Lucy not to go out at night, and Lucy went all the more just to show Beppo that he couldn't boss her. Beppo told Arthur that there was no money for him to go to the show, and Arthur begged for it all the more. And all the time poor lame Angelo was beginning to look more and more troubled as he sensed that things were not going right. Only Carlotta tried to keep happy, but when she saw her father beginning to get cross and restless, she too started to worry. Father had always been so happy and thoughtful and gentle, and now, as he saw his family becoming more and more unhappy, and as he sat at home all day with nothing to do, he seemed to catch their spirit of distress. Carlotta noticed her mother, too. She wasn't used to having father act this way and things were hard for her.

Then one day Carlotta burst into the house calling for her father. "Guess what Miss Bradley at the Settlement House asked me today, Father? She asked me if you would make a manger scene for the Christmas program—a manger scene to be put on the table in the living room of the Settlement House. You know, Father, like the one we have that you made out of wax when I was a little girl —will you, Father?"

Mr. Marotta couldn't help but look pleased. He was very proud of the lovely manger scene which he had made in Italy. Every year they got it out nine days before Christmas and said prayers around it every day.

But Mr. Marotta shook his head, "No, Carlotta," he said. "It was long ago that I made the manger scene, and now things are different. We haven't even the money to buy wax."

"O but you won't need to buy wax," Carlotta explained. "Once in school we made a mixture of starch and water and salt, I think it was. Wait—I'll look it up in my notebook."

Arthur, listening, caught Carlotta's enthusiasm. "Maybe I could find some straw some place in the neighborhood," he said. And Angelo said "Let's look at the old Christmas cards Mother saved and pick out the best pictures to copy from."

Almost before he knew it, Mr. Marotta had set to work on the manger scene. And almost before they knew it, all of his family began to watch him and help make plans.

One after another the figures were formed by Mr. Marotta's clever fingers—the shepherds, the Wise Men, Joseph, the Virgin, and the Babe—and as the number increased the family grew more and more interested.

"I'd like to paint them," Lucy said. "They'd be lovely with bright colored robes." And so she started to paint; and night after night she kept at it. She didn't even want to go out nights; and she didn't even think about the new dress and shoes she had wanted so badly. Beppo wanted to help, too, but he soon found that he couldn't make sheep and oxen as well as his father could. "Shall I buy animals at the five and ten?"he asked. But everyone voted against that. This manger scene was to be of nothing but the very best—their father's hands must make the animals too.

So Beppo made up his mind to use the money he had to buy the Christmas feast and surprise everyone. He smiled happily across the table at Lucy as he tucked the idea away in his mind. Arthur forgot all about wanting to go to the movies. He made the stable and manger and palm tree. Angelo cut the golden stars and pasted them on the blue sky. The troubled look had left Angelo's face—he knew that everything was all right now. Carlotta helped first Arthur and then Angelo. She was happiest of all.

So they worked on together, and as they worked Mrs. Marotta

watched and thought: "What a change the Christmas story has brought about in my family."

And then at last it was finished. The family stood silently for a moment gazing at the lovely scene. Then Carlotta spoke softly: "It is beautiful," she said, "because it is a gift our family have all made together for the Christ Child." And everyone in the family smiled happily.

"Yes," thought Mr. Marotta, "Carlotta is right—and our family is beautiful now because the Christ Child is here. The Christ Child has given the gift of happiness to us."

HOW DOES THE STORY OF CHRISTMAS MAKE POOR AND RICH FEEL TOWARD EACH OTHER?

Materials for Children's Research:

Biblical Materials:

Luke 2:1-24—Jesus was born in a stable; Luke 2:8-20—Poor shepherds came to see the baby Jesus; Matthew 2:1-11—Rich kings brought expensive gifts to Jesus; Luke 2:22-24—Jesus' parents were so poor they could only give the least expensive offering to the church; II Corinthians 8:9—Jesus became poor in order to make us truly rich

Supplementary Materials: Poems and stories which show that it is the heart rather than the possessions that make one rich or poor or that show that rich and poor have the same heart needs

Possible Activities:

Memorizing the Christmas Story

Listening to the story, "Christmas is Christmas"

Discussing the story, "Christmas is Christmas":

In what ways were Liesel and Gertrud alike? In what ways were they different?

What made Gertrud lonely at first? What finally made her happy?

Talking of Christmas customs which would have made you enjoy spending Christmas with German Liesel

Thinking of ourselves:

If all the gifts we are used to getting at Christmas were taken away, would there be anything left to make us happy? What? Can anyone take this thing away?

Think of someone to whom you have not been friendly because that person had money and better clothes, and more "bought" good times than you have. Since these things don't in themselves make a person happy, think of ways in which you can share with this person the things which bring real joy, friendship with Jesus, friendship with people.

Think of someone to whom you have not been friendly because that person has less money, poorer clothes, or does things "queerly." Since these things do not make this person, at heart, any different from you, think of ways in which you can know this person better and help this person have a happy Christmas.

Discussing the Christmas story as told in the Bible; Thinking of how poor and rich met in the worship of Jesus and of how the same thing is true today.

Asking God to help us show His love to all alike as Jesus did.

A Story:

CHRISTMAS IS CHRISTMAS

(A Story of Christmas in Germany)

Liesel Hoffman hardly knew whether to be glad or sorry when her mother, looking up from a letter which had just come, said, "Liesel, we are to have company until the New Year. Your cousin Gertrud from Stuttgart is coming to live with us until her mother gets well. Your Aunt Hildegarde is in the hospital."

Gertrud coming to live with them in their little village of Neenstettin! That was exciting, to be sure, but what would Gertrud think of them and their ways? How would they get along with each other? Gertrud was a city girl with city ways. She was used to Stuttgart where they had fine, wide streets with large stores and lovely, big homes and even trolley cars! How would this little village look to her, with its plain farm houses, its muddy roads, its one little general store and post office combined? And what would Gertrud think of her, Liesel suddenly wondered, looking down at her long, full, black skirt and her long-sleeved blouse, putting her hand up to its little standing collar.

So quickly did these thoughts race through her head that her mother had scarcely noticed her silence. Then she began to ask some questions.

"How old is she, Mother? And will she be going to school with me? Will she sleep in my room?"

"One at a time, Liesel," her mother interrupted, laughingly. "She's just three months older than you. Surely you will be going to school together, though with Christmas vacation just a week off, it will not be for very long. If you like, you may have her share your room. I think myself it would be the kind thing to do. Otherwise she will have to have the little room at the head of the stairs. If you were she, which would you prefer?"

Liesel knew what her mother meant. That was the "golden rule" and they were used to following it. "I'd rather sleep in my room than the little room," she decided. "But when is she coming, Mother? And will she really be here over Christmas?"

"She's coming tomorrow and will stay until January second. We shall have to try to make our Christmas especially happy, for

it will not be easy for her to be away from home. You and Erich will have to help her forget her loneliness."

That made Liesel feel a bit ashamed, for she had been thinking only of herself and not of how hard it would be for Gertrud to have her mother in the hospital and have to be away from home. Probably Gertrud was wondering about things, just as much as she herself was!

"Our cousin Gertrud from Stuttgart is coming tomorrow to be with us until after Christmas," she announced to Erich, her young brother, as he came in later. "She'll seem different from us at first, but we'll have to forget that and help her feel at home here, for right now she's probably wondering what it will be like here and wishing she didn't have to be away from home on Christmas!"

Liesel was right, for while she in her little German village was wondering about the coming guest, her cousin Gertrud, in the distant city, was full of doubts and questions. How could she stand it? Her mother sick and she off in a little, country village with two cousins she didn't know and an uncle and aunt she had not seen for a number of years! What would the house be like, she wondered? And the school—would it be anything like her own?

Suddenly Gertrud sat up straight as a dreadful thought occurred to her. "I'll be away from home for Christmas!"

That night, when her father returned from work, she couldn't keep back the tears. "Father, how can I stand being away from Mother and you for Christmas? I'll miss you so and I won't hear the Christmas music on our big church organ, nor our choir singing 'Stille Nacht!' And I love it so!"

"I know, dear," her father answered, his arms about her. "It won't be easy for any of us. Mother and I shall miss you, perhaps even more than you miss us. But we'll all just remember that nothing can take away from us the true meaning and joy of Christmas. Nothing can change the love, and joy, and peace Christ came to bring."

Without another word, her father sat down at the piano and played softly in the twilight, his eyes not needing to watch his fingers, "Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht." And the music did for Gertrud what it had always done—brought her a strange sense of awe and quietness of heart.

That feeling and her father's words helped the next morning when she left and helped her, too, through the day as she journeyed by train. But it was a long trip and as the train flew through towns and villages, over hills and across valleys, Gertrud could not help but think about how far from home she was traveling. Then came the time when it was her turn to get off the train.

She looked around, a bit anxiously. Had Uncle Fritz come to meet her? Yes, there he was, coming toward her, with his broad shoulders and big stride.

"*Grüss Gott,* Trudchen!" (God greet you, little Gertrud) he said, as he kissed her. And taking her arm, he led her toward an old, open car. "What a funny old car," Gertrud thought, as she climbed in.

"This is neighbor Conrad," her uncle introduced the man at the wheel, adding with a twinkle in his eye, "He's our one and only taxi man in Neenstettin!" "How different from Stuttgart!" Gertrud couldn't help thinking.

And as they started off, she noticed how loudly the little old car clattered along the rough road. When they arrived at the village Gertrud thought she had never seen a town as queer looking as this one was. It looked just like some pictures she had seen in her geography. They drove down the main street, past the little general store, the big old church in the square, and the pond with its low stone wall. Then as they turned down a side street, between a row of low, white houses, she noticed faces at the windows.

"Everyone is eager to see the girl from the city who's coming to spend Christmas with us," her uncle explained. "We hope you will feel right at home here."

"Thank you, Uncle Fritz. I think I shall," Gertrud replied, but there was a lump in her throat, and she wasn't at all sure she was telling the truth.

Just then the car came to a stop, the door of a house flew open and out came Liesel to welcome her cousin. "*Grüss Gott,* Gertrud," she said, "we are glad you have come. I am Liesel—I guess you know—and this is Erich. He's eight. And this is Mother," she added, drawing Gertrud into the house.

"Trudchen, *Grüss Gott,*" her Aunt Elise said with a kiss.

"Why, how queer," Gertrud thought, as she spoke to her aunt. "Liesel and her mother are wearing clothes that are alike—and terribly old-fashioned!" Then they went into a big room that looked like a dining-room and kitchen combined. They sat down and Aunt Elise was just beginning to ask her about her mother and father, when the church bell began to ring. As its deep tones sounded, there was a sudden hush. Gertrud's aunt and uncle and cousins all folded their hands and bowed their heads. Gertrud did the same and as they sat together in silence she thought about God. "After all, He's the same," Gertrud thought, "even though all of this is so different from home."

But when the bell stopped ringing and they all raised their heads, Gertrud could think of nothing except how strange everything was.

For supper they had bread, potatoes, apples, and milk. Even though she had all she wanted, Gertrud couldn't help but think what a simple meal this was, and in her mind she compared it with dinner at home. Then the girls got ready for bed in Liesel's big room with its sloping ceiling. It was all much plainer than at home, and the room was not very warm.

"Liesel," asked Gertrud suddenly, "what's that queer noise I hear?"

"What noise?" asked Liesel, listening. "O that!" she exclaimed. "Why that's just the cows chewing their cud. They're on the other side of that wall, you know."

"You mean they're in this house, under this roof?" asked Gertrud in surprise.

"They're not really in this house, but they are under this roof," laughed Liesel, "because our house and barn are all under one roof. Then, when we have a heavy snow storm, with big drifts, the animals can be fed just the same."

Every day there was something new to see or do, something that Gertrud called "queer" because it was all so very strange. There was the school with its one big room and its long, hard, wooden benches and its gentle, old school master; the old church with its high pulpit from which the preacher could look right down at the boys and girls all sitting up in front, directly under him. There was the little general store and post office, its shelves full of everything from sugar candy to milk pails. And then there were the other girls of the village, all wearing the full long skirt, and the long-sleeved blouse, with little standing collar.

In the midst of so much that was different, there was only one thing that didn't seem queer. And that was the feeling of Christmas in the air.

Gertrud began to make her gifts—a blotter for her uncle, a needle-book for her aunt, a string of beads for Liesel, and a workman's apron for Erich.

In the evenings after vesper bell with its moment of silent prayer, and after supper when the big table would be cleared, her aunt would spread the dough she had made for the Christmas cakes. When she was allowed to help, cutting the stars and making the other designs of reindeer, flowers, houses, and churches, Gertrud almost forgot about the queer town she was in and how far away from home it was. Then, too, it was Christmassy to sing all the loved Christmas carols as they worked.

On the day before Christmas Eve—when the children came home after their closing Christmas celebration in school, Liesel sniffed. "I smell the Christmas tree!" she whispered to Gertrud. "Father

must have gone to the woods to cut it down today. Mm-m! Doesn't it smell good?"

'It does," agreed Gertrud. "It smells just like our tree at home. I-I'm going to try not to be homesick. Mother's getting better. We'll be together again in a few weeks." But just the same it was hard for Gertrud to be as happy as Liesel. "It's just a few weeks," she kept saying to herself, but a few weeks seemed like a long, long, time.

On Christmas Eve, the door to the big room was kept shut, and Aunt Elise and Uncle Fritz would slip in and out, opening the door no wider than they had to to get through. Liesel and Erich, somehow, often had to be busy just outside the door, and whenever it was opened a crack they had to be right there to see if they couldn't get at least a little peek. By suppertime, Liesel and Erich could wait no longer.

"O Mother," begged Erich, "don't wash dishes! Can't you let them go just once?"

"Dirty dishes on Christmas Eve?" asked his mother, with a smile. "That wouldn't do, would it?"

And then they were done quick as a wink, for everyone helped, even Gertrud. Liesel's mother and father slipped into the big room once more. Now all of the children waited outside the room, not budging from the door. Then suddenly it came—singing! And Gertrude's heart for a moment skipped a beat. It was so like Christmas at home that for a minute she thought she was going to cry. *"Ihr Kinderlein Kommet,"* sang her aunt and uncle—"Oh come, children, all of you, come to Bethlehem, to see the Babe in the manger." That was the signal, the invitation to come into the room of mystery! The door flew open, the children rushed in—and then stood still at the loveliness of the scene. There in the corner stood the big fir tree, its branches laden with gilded pine cones, with gay strings of tinsel, with tempting gingerbread men, and ablaze with lighted candles. At its very tip floated an angel with gauze wings. Under the tree stood a manger scene, its golden star lighting the way for the Wise Men on their camels to bring to the Babe their offerings. And on a table near-by were the gifts and a row of five large soup plates, piled high with Christmas cakes, nuts, and an orange, each bearing a tag with a name—Gertrud, Liesel, Erich. But before a gift was touched or a cake eaten, Uncle Fritz opened the Bible and read, "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night . . ." And once again they sang, this time all of them: *"O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum,"* (O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree) and then, best beloved:

"Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht!" As they sang, Gertrud thought back to that night just before she left for the country when her father had sat down at the piano at home and played in the twilight. She remembered his words: "Nothing can take away from us the true meaning and joy of Christmas. Nothing can change the love, and joy, and peace Christ came to bring."

The next morning, as they sat in the old church so different from the fine church at home, her father's thought was still with her. And that same feeling of reverence and stillness filled her heart. Moving closer to Liesel, Gertrude thought, "After all, these people are just like me underneath. They feel the same way about Christmas that I do. And after all, Jesus was born in a stable and his home was very, very poor."

HOW DOES THE STORY OF CHRISTMAS MAKE US FEEL TOWARD FOREIGN-BORN PEOPLES?

Materials for Research:

Biblical Materials: Matthew 1:1-17—Jesus was a Jew; I Corinthians 12:12-13—Christians of all races are a part of the church of Christ; John 3:16—God sent His Son to the world, not just to Americans; II Corinthians 9:15—God's gift is so great that we can not describe all it means to us; Acts 20:35—Giving makes us happier than receiving; II Corinthians 8:5—Some Christians gave themselves, their most important gift

Supplementary Materials: Pictures and stories from church magazines showing work done among the foreign-born people of our country; pictures of the peoples of many lands

Possible Activities:

Listening to the story, "For He Was A Jew"

Discussing the story, "For He Was A Jew"

Why hadn't the Binchkofskys known about Christmas? Was it their fault?

What made the boy at the Christmas party change his attitude toward the Binchkofskys?

Who was made happy in this story? How?

Finding out from the Bible how we know of Jesus' nationality
Finding out from the Bible how God wants us to feel toward people of other races
Thinking of what we can do for foreign-born people or people of other races, whom we know
Deciding to ask our Sunday teachers if we can not do something for the "foreign-born" people with whom our denomination works even if that work is not in our town
Deciding to put ourselves in the place of these people and try to act toward them as we would want them to act toward us
Discussing some Bible verses that tell us of God's Christmas gift to us and ours to Him
Deciding what we can do to share the Christmas story with people in other lands
Deciding what we can do to make happy the Christians in other lands who are suffering because of war and other disasters (One public-school class wrote letters and sent a Christmas box to a Chinese boy who was trying to teach the children of his village the things he had learned about Christ at a mission chapel. He had no money to help him and no pictures to show to the children.)
Recording findings in note-books
Memorizing the Christmas story
Working on class project
Worshiping

A Story Suggestion:

In Bessie L. Doherty's *Missionary Worship Programs* is found the story, "For He Was a Jew" by Marie Allen Kimball. It tells of a family of Jewish children ostracized by a group of Christian children because they had "killed Jesus." The latter are finally led to see that, Jesus Himself being a Jew, they must not be unkind to those of His race. They take the Jewish children into the group and make them feel welcome at their Christmas party.

UNIT IV

WHAT CAN THE PEOPLE OF THE BIBLE TEACH ME ABOUT LIVING AS A FRIEND OF GOD?

(A Study of Bible Heroes Found in the Books of Joshua Through Micah)

OBJECTIVES:

To help the children to become familiar with certain outstanding friends of God and to discover the qualities of character they possessed because of their friendship with Him; to help them to see that these same qualities are essential today in anyone who would be used of God

To lead them to enjoy and love these stories of real people and to enter appreciatively into their experiences; to stimulate them to set up as ideals for their own conduct the qualities they have seen demonstrated in these people

To develop in them a growing habit of "practicing the presence of God" and of looking to Him for help in meeting the problems of everyday living

THE QUESTIONS INDICATED IN THE TABLE OF CONTENTS UNDER THIS UNIT WILL HELP THE CHILDREN TO DISCOVER THE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTION, WHAT CAN THE PEOPLE OF THE BIBLE TEACH ME ABOUT LIVING AS A FRIEND OF GOD?

POSSIBLE UNIFYING ACTIVITIES:

Making a hero gallery, using a doll or figure made of clay or soap to represent each character, with a plaque for each, telling why he or she has been given a place in the gallery

Planning and giving a chapel program, consisting of a series of tableaux depicting each character in turn

Making a Book of Heroes, filled with stories and pictures, to be sent to the children's ward of some hospital or some mission school

Making a series of miniature stage scenes of the favorite stories, using figures made of salt and starch

Writing a book of plays for the class library, dramatizations of the stories studied. (From these, the favorite play or plays might be chosen and presented.

SUGGESTIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL NOTEBOOK WORK:

Recording in some form the high point of each story

Stating the contribution of each individual to us today

UNIT MEMORY PASSAGE:

Psalm 1

THEME HYMN FOR UNIT:

Marching with the Heroes

LAUNCHING THE UNIT AS A WHOLE

Setting the Stage:

A Hero Gallery:

Around the room, on the bulletin board, or tacked on the blackboard may be arranged pictures of outstanding modern leaders who were and are definitely Christian in their outlook on life. Under each picture, if it can be found, may be tacked a typed copy of that individual's estimate of the worth of the Bible. Below are a few statements of men who are familiar figures to eleven-year-olds and whose pictures may readily be found:*

George Washington

The Bible has "above all . . . increased the blessings of society."

Andrew Jackson

"It (the Bible) is the rock on which our Republic rests."

Theodore Roosevelt

"Almost every man who has by his life-work added to the sum of human achievement . . . has based his life-work largely upon the teachings of the Bible."

Woodrow Wilson

"A man has deprived himself of the best there is in the world who has deprived himself of this (a knowledge of the Bible)."

King George V of England

"It is my confident hope that my subjects may never cease to cherish their noble inheritance in the English Bible, which in a secular

*These and others will be found in a free leaflet published by the American Bible Society entitled *Great Men on the Greatest Book*. It would be well to order a copy of this leaflet for each child's notebook.

aspect, is the first of national treasures and is, in its spiritual significance, the most valuable thing that this world affords."

Patrick Henry

"The Bible is worth all the other books ever printed."

Robert E. Lee

"The Bible is a book in comparison with which all others in my eyes are of minor importance, and which in all perplexities and distresses has never failed to give me light and strength."

Eugene Field

"I would not now exchange for any amount of money the acquaintance with the Bible that was drummed into me when a boy."
(Note: This quotation might be clipped to an open copy of Eugene Field's poems, clipped to the page "Seein' Things at Night.")

A Challenging Blackboard:

On the board, for all children to see, may be written this exceedingly thought-provoking statement by Woodrow Wilson:*

"The Bible is the Word of Life. I beg that you will read it and find this out for yourselves—read, not little snatches here and there, but long passages that will really be the road to the heart of it. You will find it full of real men and women and of things you have wondered about and been troubled about all your life, and the more you read it, it will become plain to you what things are worth while and what are not, what things make men happy — and the things that are guaranteed to make men unhappy. When you have read the Bible you will know that it is the Word of God, because you will have found it the key to your own heart, your own happiness, your own duty."

A Game:

Can You Think of a Story?

As the teacher holds up each picture, she may state the central

*Quoted in pamphlet by Wilbert W. White. *Why Read the Bible? How to Read the Bible, What to Read, and Why.* (Reprinted from a Bible published by Grosset and Dunlap, N. Y., 1931.)

thought of the comment upon the Bible made by the individual whose portrait she holds. After this statement, she may ask:

"Can you think of a story or of some verses from the Bible which . . .

would make George Washington say that the Bible had brought the people of the world more happiness than anything else?

would have led Jefferson to say that the Bible made better citizens?

would have led Jackson to say that the Bible was a rock to build our country on?

would have led Lincoln to say that it helped men to live better, and to die better?

etc.

Guiding Thought:

When the children have finished looking at the pictures and playing the game, the teacher may summarize their probable feelings by saying that it is clear to everyone that the Bible helps people live better and happier lives. She might add that Woodrow Wilson has given us some hints as to how we can get this help for ourselves and has hinted at some of the interesting things we find. Following this, she may lead the children to read the blackboard quotation from Woodrow Wilson with her and ask:

In this quotation, Woodrow Wilson has given us a key to reading the Bible in a way that will help us. Can you find this key?

In this quotation, Woodrow Wilson has also mentioned some of the interesting and helpful things we will find when we do read the Bible. What are some of these?

Purposing:

With the answering of the above questions will come the desire, "Let's read some of the stories in the Bible to see what help they

Planning:

can give us in living as children of God."

Since the children have read most of the stories of Genesis and Exodus the previous year, it will be easy to suggest that they start reading the story-sections which follow, stories from Joshua on.

The group must decide, however, upon some method of recording the things they discover about these heroes of the Bible, the things about these men which have made them great enough to be remembered and which will help to make us useful, too. The children, themselves, may have many suggestions but may wish to consider those mentioned in the introduction to this unit.

After deciding upon a major activity, definite plans for carrying it out may be used.

Suggestions for Worship:

Possible Hymns: We March, We March to Victory
Marching with the Heroes
Stand Up for Jesus, stanza 3
Father Lead Me Day by Day

Unison Bible Reading: Psalm 1

Conversation about Psalm 1

Thinking about the two pictures found here:

Why is a good man like a tree?

Why is an evil man like chaff?

Thinking about what makes a "happy" man, a man useful like a tree

Thinking about what makes an "unhappy" man, a man useless like chaff

A Prayer:

Thanking God for the Bible

Asking God's guidance in getting help from it

WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM JOSHUA?

The Story Outlined:

Joshua 1:1-9—Joshua receives his order and a promise from God.
Joshua 3:7-17—The priests and the people pass over the Jordan.
Joshua 4:15-24—Joshua sets up twelve memorial stones.
Joshua 6:1-20—The city of Jericho falls.
Joshua 21:43-45—Joshua reminds his people of the faithfulness
22:1-6 of God.
Joshua 23:1-16—Joshua has a farewell message for his people.
Joshua 24:1-31—Joshua leads his people to take a stand for God.

Possible Activities:

Listening to the story of Joshua

Going to the Bible to find the main points in the story, as a basis for discussion, with the following questions in mind:

What command did God give Joshua over and over again? (See Joshua 1:6, 7, 9, 18)

What help did God promise to give Joshua so that he could live up to this command? (See Joshua 1:5-9.)

What proof did Joshua have that God was keeping His promise? (See Joshua 4:23-24; 6:2, 16, 27.)

What big choice did Joshua have to make? (See Joshua 24:14-15.)

What law of God was he keeping?

In what ways did Joshua try to lead his people to have the courage to take their stand for God? (See Joshua 23:1-3, 6, 11, 14, and 24:31.)

What difference did it make that Joshua took his stand?

Learning by heart Joshua 1:9: underlining it with red pencil in their own Bibles; reading it over and over, while thinking of its wonderful meaning; listing on the blackboard and in their notebooks some of the laws of God that take most courage to obey today

Stating in definite terms the answer to the question, "What can I learn from Joshua?"

Continuing study of Psalm 1, thinking of the way in which Joshua was "like a tree planted by the rivers of water"

Planning and participating in worship

Starting work on the class activity, writing Joshua's story in the form of a play, putting Joshua into the book of heroes or the gallery, or whatever other activity may have been chosen

Supplementary Materials:

Theme hymn: Marching with the Heroes

Other hymns: I Would be True
Dare to be Brave, Dare to be True
We March, We March to Victory

Pictures of the crossing of the Jordan, the fall of Jericho, etc.

A map of Palestine, showing the distribution of tribes

WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM THE JUDGES?

The Story in Outline:

Highlights in the story: Judges 2:6-10, 3:7, 12, 15; 4:1, 3; 6:7; 8:33-34; 10:6, 10, 15-16; 13:1, 3-5

Summary of the book of Judges: Judges 2:11-23

A key to what was wrong in the time of the Judges: Judges 17:6

Questions for Discussion:

What do you learn about God from His treatment of the Israelites during this period of their history?

Have any other people ever tried His patience as much? Why?

Have you ever done wrong, gotten into trouble, prayed for forgiveness, gotten out of trouble, and then done the wrong all over again? How do you think God feels when you act in this manner?

By what rule of life did the people in the time of the Judges live? (Look up Judges 17:6)

Do any people follow this rule today?

Is there anything wrong with this rule? What?

What was the reason back of their choice of a rule of this kind? (Look carefully at Judges 17:6 again.)

Whom had God intended them to have as king?

If they had recognized God as King, what rule would they have followed in their living?

By what rule do you live?

Who is King in your heart?

What may happen to our country if we forget our King and follow the rule the Israelites followed during the period of the Judges?

Possible Activities:

Listening to a description of the times of the Judges, looking up verses describing these times and charting them on the board.

Listening to and discussing the story of Deborah, Gideon, or Samson, remembering that even though they did wrong things they lived in a very evil time and were the best that God could find to help Him help His people.

Deciding whether or not to put one of these judges among the heroes chosen by the class
Working on the class project
Participating in worship

Supplementary Materials:
Pictures of some of the judges
Hymns:
Who is On the Lord's Side
O Worship the King
Lead on, O King Eternal
Take My Life and Let It Be
Have Thine Own Way, Lord
What a Friend We Have In Jesus
Jesus, Saviour, Pilot Me

WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM RUTH?

The Story Outlined:
Ruth 1:1-8, 14-22)—Ruth makes a choice.
Ruth 2:1-14—Ruth finds work.
Ruth 2:15-23—Ruth takes care of her home.
Ruth 4:13-22—Ruth is used by God.

Supplementary Materials:

*A PRAYER FOR HOME**

"Together in our home, dear Lord,
We come with praise;
We thank Thee for all loving hearts
And friendly ways.

"With work well done, and gentle words,
And courteous grace,
Oh, teach us how to make our home
Thy dwelling place!"

—Edna Dean Baker

Possible Activities:
Thinking of how wonderful it was that Ruth, Naomi, and Boaz lived such good lives though they lived in the time of the judges when most people were doing wrong (Ruth 1:1)
Discussing the secret of the difference between them and most of their neighbors

**My Own Book of Prayers,* edited by Mary Alice Jones. Reprinted by permission of publishers.

Thinking through the story: (Read Ruth 1:1-8, 14-22)

How did Naomi and her husband, Elimelech, come to be living in the country of Moab? (See Ruth 1:1-2.)

From what country had they come? (See Ruth 1:1.)

Who were Ruth and Orpah? (See 1:3-4.)

What two reasons made Naomi decide to go back to her own country? (See 1:5-6.)

Why do you think Naomi told her daughters-in-law to return to their old homes? (See 1:8 and 15.)

What did Orpah choose to do? (1:14.)

What did Ruth choose to do? (1:16-17.)

Now that you have thought through the beginning of this story, read chapter 2 and 4:13-22. You might like to write the whole story in your own words.

Finding out what Ruth thought important in making a choice:

What things might have made Ruth want to stay in her own country of Moab?

What things must she have known would be hard for her if she went to Naomi's country, Bethlehem-Judah?

What things must Ruth have thought of that made her decide to go with Naomi?

Why do you think she chose to do the hard thing?

Letting Ruth help us make choices:

If Ruth were living today, she would have to make the same choices we have to make. What hard choices do we often have to make?

What would Ruth think of first in making each of these choices?

Looking up stories of people who, like Ruth, lived unselfishly

Planning and participating in worship

Working on the class project

The class may be led to think of one word to describe the reason for Ruth's being classed among the heroes of the world. The details of how best to include her in the hero gallery, the book of plays, or the tableaux should be decided upon before the end of the class period.

In one seventh grade one of the girls wrote the story of Ruth as an original play, which was then produced by the whole group.

WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM SAMUEL?

The Story Outlined:

I Samuel 1:1-3, 9-18—A prayer is made.

I Samuel 1:19-28—A prayer is answered.

I Samuel 2:12-19—Samuel is different from Eli's sons.

I Samuel 3:1-21—A child hears God's voice.

Possible Activities:

Listening to the story of Samuel

Reading I Samuel 3 aloud, in unison, trying to picture how Samuel looked and felt

Discussing the story, on the basis of the following questions:

What things made him such a good helper for Eli?

What things made him a boy whom God could use? (I Samuel 3:9-14, 19-21)

Talking about the difference between Samuel and Eli's sons; listing the influence for good in the lives of Eli's sons (a good father, probably a good mother, a good home, good surroundings—the temple—and training as priests) and in Samuel's life (good parents, away from his mother, but good surroundings in the temple, Eli's training); noting that these influences were much the same; trying to decide what it was that made them different

Continuing study of Psalm 1 in the light of Samuel and Eli's sons

Listing on the blackboard and in their notebooks, illustrating with drawings of a lamp, a seven-branched candlestick and a scroll, the different things Samuel must have done to help care for the church every day

Answering the question, "What can I learn from Samuel?"

Talking about ways in which the children can help in their own churches, to help care for the church building, to help the minister or Sunday-school teachers

Listing on the blackboard things which can make them boys and girls whom God can use

Planning and participating in worship

Working out the story of Samuel as part of class activity

Supplementary Materials:

Special Hymn:* (If melody is not known, this could be copied into their notebooks and read as a prayer)

"Hushed was the evening hymn, the temple courts were dark,
The lamp was burning dim before the sacred Ark,
When suddenly a Voice divine
Rang through the stillness of the shrine.

"O give me Samuel's ear, an open ear, O Lord,
Alive and quick to hear each whisper of Thy word.
Like him, to answer at Thy call
And to obey Thee first of all."

Scripture for Worship: Proverbs 20:11-12
Pictures of Samuel

*By James D. Burns, music by Arthur Sullivan; in Smith's *Hymnal for American Youth.*

WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM JONATHAN?

The Story in Outline:

I Samuel 14:1-23—Jonathan, the brave prince.
I Samuel 17:55-18:4—Jonathan shares with a shepherd boy.
I Samuel 18:5-16, 19:1-10—Jonathan is a peacemaker.
1 Samuel 20:1-23, 24-42)—Jonathan is willing to give up his throne to his friend.
I Samuel 23:16-18—Jonathan goes to his friend.

Supplementary Material:

Proverbs 17:17
Stories of great friendships, such as that of Damon and Pythias
The hymn, I Would Be True

Possible Activities:

Thinking about the story:

In what ways were David and Jonathan alike? (I Sam. 14:1-23, 17:32-51)

In what ways were their lives different?

Of what do you think Jonathan was thinking when he chose David as his friend—his good looks, his character, his clothes, his money? (18:1-4)

What does this show about what kind of young man Prince Jonathan was?

As a prince, what did Jonathan probably dream about becoming some day?

What was it that made Saul turn against David?

Did Jonathan have a reason for turning against David? (16:11-13; 20:31) Why didn't he? (18:1-3)

What different things did Jonathan do to show his friendship for David? (18:4; 19:2-6; 20:4, 12; 23:16-18)

Finding the secret of this unselfish friendship:

Who else was a partner in this friendship? (18:3; 20:8; 20:11-17; 20:42; 23:16, 18)

What difference do you think this made?

Making some rules of friendship for ourselves, rules which may help us to be friends like Jonathan

Planning and participating in worship

Deciding what one thing should be told about Jonathan through the class project

Working on the class project

WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM DAVID, THE BOY?

The Story Outlined:

I Samuel 16:1-13—Samuel anoints David, God's choice as the next king.

I Samuel 17:1-11—Goliath challenges the armies of Israel

I Samuel 17:12-19—David is sent with food to his soldier brothers in camp.

I Samuel 17:20-30—David hears Goliath's challenge and thinks some one should accept it.

I Samuel 17:31-54—David, in the Name of God, defies and kills Goliath.

Possible Activities:

Listening to the story

Finding the high points of the story in the Bible and talking them over:

How did the soldiers of Israel feel when they saw the giant? (17:24)

Why did David decide to fight Goliath? (17:25-26)

What difficulties did David meet when he started to do this daring thing? (17:28-29) (17:33)

What made David dare to do what others told him he couldn't do? (17:34-37)

On what did Goliath depend to help him win the fight? (17:41-45a)

On what did David depend to help him win the fight? (17:38-40, 45-50)

Drawing or pasting pictures in notebooks to show what David, the shepherd boy, did for his people

Answering the question, "What can I learn from David, the boy?"

Talking about times when David's secret will help us to live as friends of God

Planning and participating in worship

Continuing work on class activity, including David as a boy

Supplementary Materials:

Various hymns previously suggested, including theme hymn

Psalm 27, David's "Psalm of fearless trust in God"

Prayer: (A Prayer for Courage" in *My Own Book of Prayers*—p. 33—would fit very well here.)

Pictures of David watching his sheep, playing before Saul, slaying the lion, killing Goliath

WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM DAVID, THE YOUNG MAN?

The Story Outlined:

I Samuel 22:1-4; 24:1-22—David spares his enemy's life.
I Samuel 26:1-25—David again spares his enemy's life.
I Samuel 31:1-6, II Samuel 1:17-27—David mourns over the death of his enemy.

Possible Activities:

Listening to the story
Reading the story in I Samuel 22:1-4 and 24:1-22, thinking of ways in which this story is like "Robin Hood"
Putting themselves in David's place, using the following suggestions:
List the things Saul had done to David which you would have felt unfair.
If you had been David, what would you have been tempted to think when you saw Saul asleep in the cave? (24:4)
What would have kept you from taking Saul's life? (24:6, 9-12)
Try to imagine how you would have felt when your enemy said to you, "My son, you are better than I; for you have paid back good for evil."
Going back to Psalm 1, trying to recite it from memory, thinking of the laws David must have meditated upon, noting how King Saul illustrates the second part of the Psalm
Thinking silently about the times when they themselves had returned "evil for evil"; trying to visualize the difference it would have made if they had copied David
Answering the question, "What can I learn from David, the young man?"
Planning and participating in worship
Continuing work on David for the class activity

Supplementary Materials:

Theme hymn, also "Dare to Be Brave, Dare to Be True," stanza 3
Scripture: Matthew 5:43-48
A Prayer for My Enemies: O God, help me to love those who hate me, to say good things about those who say bad things about me, to do kind things to those who do mean things to me, to pray for those who are unkind, and to remember always that I am no better than they, for I do other things which need Thy forgiveness. Help me to do these things because they are what Jesus would have me do. Amen.
Pictures of David and Saul
Modern stories of those who forgive their enemies

WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM DAVID, THE KING?

The Story in Outline:

David, the "king after God's own heart"

II Samuel 5:1-3, 11-12—David is made king by the people.

II Samuel 7:1-29—David wants to be a "king after God's own heart"

II Samuel 9:1-13—David is kind to the son of his old friend.

David sins.

II Samuel 11:1-27—David commits murder to get what he wants.

David repents and is forgiven.

II Samuel 12:1-15—God rebukes David for his sin.

Psalm 51, II Samuel 12:24-25—David repents and is forgiven.

David sees the results of his wrong-doing.

II Samuel 15:1-12—The people lose faith in their king.

II Samuel 15:13-16a—The king flees from his home and city with his trusty followers.

II Samuel 16:5-14—David "takes" spiteful criticism because he knows he deserves it.

II Samuel 17:27-29—Some loyal subjects are kind to the unhappy king.

II Samuel 18:1-33—The king's son is killed in battle. The king mourns.

David, again, lives as a "king after God's own heart."

II Samuel 19:15—The king starts back to his capital city.

II Samuel 19:21-23—The king forgives an enemy.

II Samuel 19:31-39—The king is kind to a friend.

I Kings 2:1-4—David tells his son of the lesson he has learned.

Suggestions for Worship:

The story of David, the king

Scripture: Psalm 51:1-17—David's prayer of repentance

Sentence prayers taken from Psalm 51

(The children may be asked to pick out, from this Psalm, one verse which each could pray sincerely as a prayer of his own heart. Those who wish, may read these aloud as sentence prayers while all have their heads bowed.)

Hymn: Father, Lead Me Day By Day

Possible Activities:

Discussing the things which made David a "king after God's own heart"

Talking about how David, strong and rich and powerful, began to think that he ought to have anything he wanted regardless of other people's rights and of God's laws

Thinking about how David felt when he realized what a terrible thing he had done

Listing the evil results of his own wrongdoing which David had to bear

Discussing God's forgiveness, how He loves us even after we do wrong but often lets us bear the results of our wrong-doing (Compare with mother forgiving child for eating forbidden candy, doing all she can to take away pain of resulting ache, but seeing that the child must bear the results of his own actions.)

Listing the fine things David, the old king, did for friend and enemy

Discussing how God helps us "start again" after mistakes we have made

Writing or finding prayers of forgiveness, or copying from the board into individual notebooks the prayers for forgiveness on p. 34-35 in *My Own Book of Prayers*

Working on the class project

WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM SOLOMON?

The Story in Outline:

I Kings 2:1-4—Advice is given to the king.
I Kings 3:5-15—The king makes a choice.
I Kings 3:16-28; 4:29-34; 10:23-24—God grants the king his wish.
I Kings 4:21-28; 7:1-12; 9:26-10:29—God gives the king more than he asks for.
I Kings 5:1-6:37—The king builds a house for God.
Ecclesiastes 1:12-2:11—The king uses God's gifts selfishly and is unhappy.
I Kings 9:1-9—God warns the king.
I Kings 11:1-13—The king does not heed the warning.
I Kings 12:1-20—The warning is fulfilled.

Supplementary Materials:

The Book of Proverbs
Psalm 1
Stories of people who made good choices and failed to live up to them
Stories of people who made good choices and lived up to them
Hymn: Now in the Days of Youth

Possible Activities:

Listening to the story of Solomon
Discussing the story:
Read I Kings 3:12-14, we have the one condition upon which his good choice could keep on bringing good to him. What was this "if"?
In what ways did God bless Solomon after he had made his good choice?
What things did Solomon do to live up to his choice?
In what ways did Solomon fail to live up to his choice?
How did his failure make him feel?
How did his failure affect the country?
Weighing the good and bad in Solomon's life to decide whether or not to place him among the heroes
Thinking about our own choices:
A promise to God to be honest
Planning and participating in worship
Working on the class project

If you could pray one prayer which you knew God would answer as you wanted it answered, what would you pray?

What makes these choices worthwhile? When are they worthless?

A decision to be a church member
A resolution to be more obedient
A resolution to quit fussing
A decision to ask Jesus to be my Master

WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM ELIJAH?

The Story Outlined:

I Kings 16:29-17:7—Elijah dares tell the truth.
I Kings 17:8-24—Elijah helps and is helped.
I Kings 18:1-40—Elijah dares stand alone for the right.
I Kings 18:41-46—Elijah trusts God to keep His promise.
I Kings 19:1-19—God comforts His discouraged friend.
I Kings 21:1-29—Elijah dares tell the king of his sin.
II Kings 2:1-14—God takes His friend to be with Himself.

Possible Activities:

Listening to the story

Looking at a make-believe newspaper of Elijah's day (headlines printed on blackboard by teacher):

THE SAMARIA DAILY NEWS
B.C. 874

Weather Forecast
Today—Hot and dry
Tomorrow—No sign of rain

Late City Edition

QUEEN JEZEBEL KILLS PROPHETS OF GOD

Tears down altars of God
(I Kings 18:4; 19:10)

AHAB'S SEARCH FOR ELIJAH CONTINUES

Messengers sent to All Lands
Elijah Last Seen Going Toward Zarephath
(I Kings 18:10; 17:10)

TEMPLE OF BAAL COMPLETED

King Ahab sets up Altar
850 Prophets Lead People in Worship of Jezebel's God
(I Kings 16:32; 18:19)

FAMINE CONTINUES SORE IN THE LAND

Third Year of Drought Nears an End
(I Kings 17:1; 18:1-2)

Going to the Bible to check the sources of above news

Writing a newspaper page for the bulletin board, filling in details; doing the same in their notebooks

Pretending to be reporters and writing up the account of what happened at Mt. Carmel (I Kings 18:1-46; 19:1-3)

Answering the question, "What can I learn from Elijah?"

Searching newspapers and magazines of today to discover stories of people who still dare to speak out for the truth

Discussing situations in which it is hard for them to take a stand as Elijah did; suggesting things they ought to do that take courage

Writing a class prayer, asking God to help them to be as brave for the right as Elijah was

Planning and participating in worship

Continuing work on class activity (II Kings 1:8 suggests Elijah's costume and appearance)

Supplementary Materials:

Various hymns of courage, already suggested
Scripture: Joshua 1:9

Story: Kapiolani, the Hawaiian Queen

(This is found in several collections of missionary tales, and also written by John Oxenham in a poem, in "Bees in Amber.")

Pictures of Elijah (Especially good is Francis B. Dicksee's "Ahab and Elijah," Union pictures)

WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM ELISHA?

The Story Outlined:

I Kings 19:19; II Kings 2:1-15—Elisha is chosen to take Elijah's place.

II Kings 4:1-7—Elisha helps a poor widow pay a debt.

II Kings 4:8-17—Elisha finds a friend.

II Kings 4:18-37—Elisha helps his friend.

II Kings 5:1-14—Elisha heals an enemy.

II Kings 5:15-27—Elisha insists on truthfulness.

II Kings 6:8-23—Elisha knows God's host is with him.

II Kings 6:24-7:16—Good tidings for a city.

Supplementary Materials:

The story of Brother Lawrence and his book, *Practicing the Presence of God*

Isaiah 41:10

Hymns: Father Lead Me Day By Day
What a Friend We Have in Jesus

A Possible Procedure:

An interesting way in which to study the life of Elisha would be for the teacher to prepare to tell the first and last incidents outlined above and ask committees to present, either in story or dramatic form, the other incidents of the narrative. The teacher could, in her introduction, arouse interest in this prophet and, in her closing story, draw the loose ends together.

Points for Discussion:

How, in these stories, did Elisha show that he knew that God was with him?

How did the thought of God's being with him make him act?

When we forget, as Gehazi forgot, that God is with us, what are we apt to do?

When we remember, as Elisha remembered, that God is with us, how are we apt to live?

Talking about others who have lived in the knowledge that God was near; e.g., Brother Lawrence (Although Brother Lawrence lived more than three hundred years ago, people today still remember him for his wonderful life of helpfulness. If you had asked Brother Lawrence himself, "What is the secret of your life, Brother Lawrence?" he would have answered, "If there is any secret it is that I practice the presence of God. Because I remember that He is always with me, I try to make every act one which would please Him and I am never afraid because He is near."

Talking about and learning a verse which will make "practicing the Presence of God" easier: Isaiah 41:10

Worshiping God

Including Elisha in the class project

WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM AMOS?

Suggested Approach:

It is fun to look through old books to find out who their authors were and what life was like many, many years ago. Many books are thrown away when they become old and worn. If people keep them for one hundred years, we know they must love or value them very much. If a book is kept for two hundred years, we know it is very important. If it is kept for one thousand years, we know it must be something which we, too, would like to hear.

Here, in the book of Amos, we have a tiny book of sermons which has been kept for over twenty-seven hundred years. Let's see if we can find out something about why it has lived so long. Look through this old scroll and see if you can find the reason.

Possible Activities:

Opening this old book of sermons, using the following questions as a guide in discovering things of interest about Amos himself:
Who first spoke these sermons? (Amos 1:1)
Where did he live? (1:1)
What kind of work did he do? (1:1)
Why did he stop this work to become a preacher? (7:15)
To whom did he preach? (7:15)

Finding out about conditions in the days of Amos by completing the following:

What was wrong in the country that caused him to stop his work to preach to his people?

3:10 The people did not know .....
3:10 The people were .....
3:10 The people were .....
3:15 The rich spent their money for .....
.....
4:1 The rich .....and took the money to buy .....
5:7, 12 The Judges .....
6:1-6 The rich spent their time in .....
.....
They did not care that many were in .....
8:4-6 Business people and farmers alike were .....
.....

Finding out what Amos preached by completing the following:
What did Amos say would happen to the country if the people did not change?

3:2 God would .....
3:11, 15: 6:7 Enemies would .....
.....
8:10 The people of the land would .....
.....
8:11-12 There would be no one to .....
.....

What did Amos say the people could do to save their country?
5:4, 8 .....
.....
5:14 .....
5:15 .....
5:23-24 .....
.....

Continuing the search to discover how Amos, the farmer, was treated when he came to the city to speak for God (5:10; 7:10-17)

Answering the question, "What can I learn from Amos?"

Thinking and talking about these questions:

If Amos stepped out of his book, would he be able to go back to his farm today? What conditions in our country might keep him preaching?

What might happen to our country if we didn't listen to Amos?

What has Amos taught you about what you can do for your country?

Which of these things can you begin doing right away?

Planning and participating in worship

Working out the story of Amos as part of the class project

A story: The Herdsman of Tekoa

Drawing map showing places condemned by Amos, connecting these by a curving line showing the judgment coming ever nearer home.

Supplementary Materials:

The picture of Amos in Sargent's "Frieze of the Prophets"

Psalm 15

Theme hymn and others previously suggested

THE HERDSMAN OF TEKOA

by Julia J. Bradley

Down in the rugged hill country of Judea, in the region of Tekoa lived a herdsman, named Amos. As Amos herded his sheep out on the rocky, bare hills about his home, he thought of the sins of his people, and of the stories he had heard of the people up in Israel,

their northern neighbor, who worshiped the golden calves at Bethel and Dan instead of coming down to the temple of Jehovah in Jerusalem to worship the only true God. As he thought of these things, there came a vision to him of the judgment God would surely bring upon his people in the north for their sins. The longer he thought the more certain he became that he must do something about it. "I'm just a coarse herdsman," he said to himself, "a dresser of sycamore trees. Shall I leave from following after sheep to speak to these city folk of God's displeasure?"

But the Lord spoke clearly in his heart, "Go, prophesy unto my people Israel." So Amos, with his shepherd's crook in his hand and his shepherd's robes bound tightly about him, set his face toward Bethel, the great center of idolatry and the rich home of the kings.

On the first day, Amos stood beside the altar at Bethel with the great capitols of the altar towering above him; in his hand he still grasped the shepherd's staff; he faced the people. Sternly he began to speak to those who had gathered to worship. "For three transgressions of Damascus, yea for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof, and they shall go into captivity to Kir, saith Jehovah."

"What is this?" the people began asking. "Come," they called to one another, "Listen to this man. He's talking about the sins of those people up there in Damascus of Syria. They deserve it; those wicked people! This prophet knows what he is talking about."

Amos finished with the judgment of Damascus and swung around to Gaza on the coast of the Philistines to the southeast. "Thus saith Jehovah: For three transgressions of Gaza, yea for four I will not turn away the punishment thereof and the remnant of the Philistines shall perish, saith the Lord Jehovah." The people nodded their heads. How right he was. But Amos was preaching against the northwest now, "Thus saith Jehovah: For three transgressions of Tyre, yea for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof, and shall devour their palaces with fire." The people were crowding around now and listening to every word. Amos whirled again in his fiery discourse and spoke against Edom their neighbor to the extreme south: "Thus saith Jehovah: For three transgressions of Edom, yea for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof —fire shall devour the cities of Teman and Bozrah." The people stood spell-bound. Were all their neighbors to be sentenced to judgment? Then Amos pounced on Moab. This was coming just a little too close home: "Thus saith Jehovah, "For three transgressions of

Moab, yea, for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof and Moab shall die with tumult and with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet."

Then, solemnly, Amos began to tell them of Judah their own brother kingdom: "For three transgressions of Judah, yea for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof, because they have rejected the law of Jehovah and have not kept his statutes."

"How right, how true," the people thought, and listened for more.

Then Amos rose to his full height, "Thus saith Jehovah," he cried, "For three transgressions of Israel, yea for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof." The crowd grew still as Amos told them of their sins, of their greed, of their violence. He spoke sarcastically of their places of worship. "Come to Bethel," he said "And transgress, to Gilgal and multiply transgressions. Dan shall fall, and Bethel and the capitols of the altar shall be broken; and the threshold will shake with the fall thereof; for there is no justice or righteousness in the land. God's people have left Him."

"Seek Jehovah and ye shall live; seek good and not evil that ye may live," he plead. "Let justice run down as waters and righteousness as a mighty stream, for God will surely take you into captivity, even beyond Damascus."

As Amos preached, the word of his doings began to spread about among the people and some of his sayings were repeated to Amaziah, the priest of the altar at Bethel. When Amaziah heard what Amos was preaching, he was greatly disturbed at what this rough herdsman dared to say in the very shadow of the king's palaces. He hurried to Jeroboam, the king. "Have you heard about this fellow Amos?" he asked. "Why, he is conspiring against you and the government. The land isn't able to hold him and his words, he thinks he is so big. He's even dared to say that the king shall die by the sword and all Israel be led away captive." The king was enraged and sent Amaziah to face the upstart prophet.

"You wonderful prophet, you," sneered Amaziah. "Why don't you go back to your hills in Judea to chew bread and prophesy there? Why come to the great Bethel, the king's sanctuary and the royal house?"

Then Amos turned upon Amaziah the full blaze of his righteous wrath. There was no fear in his heart or desire to flee this dangerous enemy. "I'm no prophet," he said, "I'm a simple herdsman. But God

called me to speak His word. What kind of a priest are you to stop the speaking of the word of God? For this sin God is going to punish you. Your children will die by the sword and you yourself shall be led away to die in a foreign land. What I have said is from God. Israel shall be taken captive for her sins!"

No one knows what became of Amos. Perhaps he was killed for his daring defense; but we do know that what he prophesied came true, and Israel was led away captive to a foreign land, because they did not repent nor return unto the Lord their God.

WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM JOSIAH?

The Story in Outline:

II Kings 21:19-26—The King is dead! Long live the King!
II Kings 22:1-2—An eight-year-old king.
II Kings 22:3-7—A young king cleans up the church.
II Kings 22:8-13—The lost Bible is found.
II Kings 23:1-14—The Bible shows the king what he should do.

Supplementary Materials:

Exodus 20:1-17—The laws which changed a country
Psalm 119:105—A light for every man

Thinking Through the Story:

What was wrong in the city in which Josiah was born? (II Kings 21:19-26)

Since he was born in the midst of wrong, how did Josiah discover what was right? (II Kings 22:1-13)

What did he do about his discovery? (II Kings 23:1-14)

Thinking about Ourselves:

If you had been born into a home where your father did wrong, into a town where people were wicked and there was no one to teach you what was right, how could you find out what was right?

After you discovered what was right what would God expect you to do about it?

If you are not sure what is right or wrong what can you do to find out?

When you really do know that something is right or wrong, what does God expect of you?

Which is Worse?

A Japanese, who does not know Jesus, fighting in a war for more land—	or	A "Christian" boy or girl who tries to "get even?"
An African worshiping idols—	or	A "Christian" boy or girl who never thinks of thanking God?
The son of a gangster who steals a car—	or	The son of a Christian who cheats in an examination?
A son of an atheist who laughs at God—	or	A son of a Christian who swears and uses God's name wrongly?

If you are not sure what is right or wrong, what can you do to find out?

Other Possible Activities:

Discussing how the laws of God are "lights" for our pathways and learning Psalm 119:105

Remembering the ten commandments and talking about how they helped Josiah and how they help us

Worshiping

Working on the class project

WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM ESTHER?

The Story Outlined:

Esther 2:1-10—The king seeks a queen.
Esther 2:11-20—Esther is chosen.
Esther 3:1-15—Haman plots against the Jews.
Esther 4:1-17—Esther decides to risk her life for her people.
Esther 5:1-7:10—The enemy is destroyed.
Esther 8:1-17—Esther's people are saved.
Esther 9:20-32—Esther's deed is remembered to this day.

Possible Activities:

Listening to the story

Finding out "Who's who" in Esther:

Ahasuerus (1:1-3) .....
Mordecai (2:5-7) .....
Esther (2:5-7, 17) .....
Haman (3:1-2) .....

Looking at a map to see where it all happened

Thinking about the fact that Esther is the one book in the Bible in which the name of God is not once mentioned, but that God is there, just the same; finding the special places where God is at work in this book, even though He is not mentioned by name (e. g., 2:17, 4:14, 4:16, 5:3, 6:1-2)

Discussing why it was that Esther risked her life when she went before the king

Answering the question, "What can I learn from Esther?"

Thinking and talking about an important question:

Could there be things which God is counting on us to do?
Are there things for which I am responsible?
At home? In school? Among my friends? In my church? In my town?

Planning and participating in worship

Adding Esther to the series of plays, the tableaux, the book of heroes under way

Supplementary Materials:

Review of Psalm 1

Special hymn: I Would Be True

Pictures of Esther

Information about the feast of the Purim, as found in a Bible dictionary or in Kligermann's "Feasts and Fasts of Israel"

WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM JOB?

(Pre-Easter Session)

Materials for Children's Research: (These should also help teacher to tell the story.)

Biblical Materials:

Job 1-2—God gives Satan permission to test Job.

Job 3:1; 42:6—Job and his friends argue about the cause of his suffering and are finally answered by God Himself.

3:1-3, 25, 26—Job in despair, thinks it better to be dead than in such pain.

4:1-2, 7-8; 5:8-17—Eliphaz suggests that Job change his wicked ways.

6:24, 25; 7:20-21—Job asks God what wrong he has done.

8:1-3, 5-7—Bildad tells Job to stop such talk, tells him to confess his hidden sins.

9:1-2, 11, 32-33—Job asks how he can talk to God when he does not know how to reach Him.

11:6b, 7-8—Zophar says that God is too great to talk to.

12:1-4; 19:1, 13-19—Because of his poverty and sickness Job's former friends have gone against him.

19:25-26; 21:7—Job says that he is sure of seeing God some day but wonders why the wicked prosper when the righteous suffer.

18:1-2, 5; 20:1, 4-5—Job's visitors tell Job that he is wrong and repeat that he must change his evil ways and return to God.

23:1, 3-10—Job says that he longs to know how to find God. He begins to feel that this suffering will make him a better man.

26:7-14—A storm begins to darken the sky.

29:12-17; 31:16-40—Job seeks an answer to why a person who has done much good should suffer.

34:1-9; 35:1-16—Elihu tells Job that he is wrong to call on God for an answer.

38-41—God answers Job from the whirlwind.

42:1-6—Job understands God better and repents for his pride.

Job 42:7-17—Job is again blessed by God.

Mark 16:9-20; Matthew 28, Luke 24; John 20-21; John 11:25-26; I Corinthians 15:42-44, 51; 10:13; I John 2:1—Messages of hope which we have today which Job did not have.

John 20:29—Happy are those who have not actually seen and yet believe.

James 5:11—Job is an inspiration to Jesus' own brother and disciple.

Supplementary Materials: Pictures of Job, pictures of the resurrection, nature pictures which show us something of God's glory and beauty and majesty.

Possible Activities:

Talking of the fact that there is suffering in the world even at a glad time like Easter

Listening to the story of a man who suffered (This story is in one of the first books of the Bible ever written. It may be a true story of a real man. It may be a story telling a truth about God. Whichever it is, it is God's message to us about suffering.)

Discussing the facts in the story:

Why did Satan want to harm Job?

What limits did God put on the evil Satan could do to Job?

Why did Job's wife want Job to curse God and die?

What did Job's friends think was the cause of Job's suffering?

What did Job feel about his friendship with God? (9:1-2, 11, 32-33; 23:3-4, 8-9-10a)

What encouraging thoughts did Job have during this conversation with his visitors? (12:13; 19:25-26; 23:10b; 26:14) and verses preceding

How did God help Job feel His nearness? (38-41)

How did God's answer make Job feel?

How had Job's friends treated him before and after his losses? (29:1-2, 7-25; 30:1-31)

What two very hard things did Job do after God blessed him the second time? What does this show about Job's heart?

Talking about the meaning of the story:

Who is back of the suffering in the world? Am I ever partly responsible for suffering?

What good can come of suffering?

Does God always give riches as a blessing to those who have faith in Him? What gifts are even better?

Satan took Job's possessions, his family, his friends, and his health. What part of him could he not take without Job's consent? Why? Why does God allow suffering?

In what way does the Good Friday story help answer the wish spoken by Job? (9:32-33) To one of the thieves who suffered by Him, what did Jesus promise? (Luke 23:43, I John 2:9)

What hopes can make a person strong even in suffering? (19:25-26, 23:106)

In what way does the Easter story make these hopes stronger? Look up Biblical references under "messages of hope" in Biblical materials.

Reading and talking about the wonders of nature which helped Job understand God better

Talking of things in nature which help us understand the Easter story

Recording the answer to this session's question in notebooks and class project

Illustrative materials:

Our bodies are houses. When they get old and unusable, we move out to live with God.

The war in China has brought many people into Christian refugee camps where they have heard the Gospel message for the first time. It has helped non-Christians to see that Christ does make Christians braver and kinder than others. It has taken churches, schools, and hospitals to a part of China which never had these blessings before. Somehow, in spite of Satan's war, God has worked out a blessing, has brought good out of suffering.

A young married woman, who had spent most of her time going to parties, swimming, and traveling, suddenly found that she had tuberculosis, that she would have to stay in a sanitarium for two years and would never be able to swim or dance again. She was bitter. "There must not be a God", she said. "Here I was happy in my little home. My husband and I had made wonderful plans for our future. And now it will all have to be changed."

She went to the sanitarium and after seven months said, "You know, I am sure now that there is a God. I am sure, too, that He allowed sickness to come my way because I had never taken time so much as to think about Him. Here at the sanitarium I have had the time I needed. I'm happier than I've ever been before. My husband and I are making new plans, now, plans much better than the old ones. God will be a part of our home from now on."

A young missionary's first baby died. "How terrible", said her friends. "Here you have given your life in God's service and he allows things like this to happen. He can not be a loving God." But the young missionary smiled. "Before my baby died", she said, "none of the native women would believe me when I said that there was a life with God after death. After my baby died one came to weep with me."

"'But', I said, 'I will see my child again.' She had lost a baby too. From that day on she listened to every word I taught, and brought her friends with her."

FROM DEATH CAME LIFE

A missionary to China, John W. Vinson, was captured by bandits while visiting a little out-station church which had failed to grow in Christian life and worship. With Mr. Vinson and five hundred Chinese from the village, the bandits fled, pursued by Chinese soldiers. Almost overcome by the soldiers, the bandits turned to Mr. Vinson and said, "We will let you go free if you will take this letter back to the captain of the militia and delay him enough to give us time to escape."

"What about all these other captives?" asked Mr. Vinson. "Will they be freed too?"

"No! We will take them with us," answered the bandits. "But you will have your freedom."

"I cannot save my life by risking theirs," said Mr. Vinson. "I will not delay the soldiers."

"Then we will shoot you," said the bandits.

"I am not afraid," answered Mr. Vinson. "You can kill my body; but my soul will go straight to God."

John Vinson did not delay the soldiers. John Vinson was killed. The soldiers overtook the bandits and saved the five hundred Chinese The bandit tribe was broken up and peace was brought to the country. The church at the little out-station, once dead, became one of the strongest churches in the province.

"Mr. Vinson gave his life for us," said the people. "He was not afraid to die. If his religion could lead him to do things like that, there must be something good about it! We have come to this church to find out the secret of his courage and self-sacrifice."

God hath not promised*
Skies always blue.
Flower-strewn pathways
All our lives through.
God hath not promised
Sun without rain
Joy without sorrow
Peace without pain.

But God hath promised
Strength for the day.
Rest from labor,
Light for the way,
Grace for the trials
Help from above
Unfailing sympathy—
Undying love.

WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM JONAH?
(Post-Easter Session)

The Story in Outline:

Jonah 1:1-3—Jonah runs away from the work God has asked him to do, runs away from the work of helping people he does not like.
Jonah 1:4-16—Jonah is caught in a storm and cast overboard.
Jonah 1:17-2:10—God saves Jonah's life.
Jonah 3:1-4—Jonah obeys God's second command.
Jonah 3:5-10—Jonah's preaching brings the people of Nineveh to God.
Jonah 4:1-5—Jonah is angry because God forgives the sins of the people of Nineveh.
Jonah 4:6-11—God teaches Jonah a lesson in mercy.

Possible Activities:

Listening to the story of Jonah as told by the teacher
Discussing the story of Jonah
Including Jonah in the class activity
Participating in worship

*Casterline card, No. 5501, Eden, N. Y. Written by Annie Johnson Flint, who was so crippled that she was bedridden for many years, yet constantly encouraged others by her helpful poems.

Points for Discussion:

An introductory explanation:

Before the Japanese invaded China, but while feeling in China was rising against Japan, a Chinese minister of the gospel preached to his Chinese congregation on "Jonah". "Suppose," he said, "that God called to you and said, 'I want you to go preach to the people of Japan; if you do not go and they have no chance to hear of Me and to change their ways, they will surely be destroyed from off the face of the earth.' What would you do?"

The people of Israel felt about Nineveh very much as the people of China felt about Japan a few years before the war between those two countries broke out. Jonah really wanted the people of Nineveh destroyed. He did not want them to know God and His love and to change their ways. He did not want to tell them of God. And so he ran away from the work God asked him to do.

Questions about the story:

Jonah could run away from God's work; but could he run away from God?

What good qualities of character did Jonah have which made him a person God could use in His work, in spite of his faults? (Jonah 1:4-13; 2:1-9)

How did God save Jonah's life? Why this way? (Note: There have been, in recent years, discoveries of fish which have carried for a short time, still living in their bodies, animals as large as a man.)

What was the result of Jonah's preaching?

Why was Jonah angry when his preaching had results?

What did God teach Jonah through his experience with the gourd vine? (Note that God cares for animals as well as for people. Jonah 4:11)

Questions about us:

Have you ever tried to run away from work which God gave you to do? What happened?

Would you be willing to go to "foreign" or "enemy" people to help them to know of God's saving love?

What "after Easter" command did Jesus give His disciples which is just as much a command to us as God's command was to Jonah? (Matthew 28:19-20)

Do you so have the loving mercy of God in your hearts that you hate to see life, even the life of an animal, destroyed uselessly?

Supplementary Materials:

Pictures of work modern missionaries are doing

Pictures of people who need to know of the love and mercy of God

Missionary hymns

WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM DANIEL?

The Story in Outline:

Daniel 1:1-21—Daniel refuses to eat what will hurt his body.

Daniel 2:1-23—Daniel prays for knowledge.

Daniel 2:24-49—Daniel interprets a dream.

Daniel 5:1-12—Daniel is chosen to help.

Daniel 5:13-31—Belshazzar's downfall.

Daniel 6:1-18—Daniel refuses to do wrong.

Daniel 6:19-28—Daniel is saved from a terrible death.

Possible Activities:

Listening to the story of Daniel

Studying the picture of Daniel: (Daniel in the Den of Lions by Briton Riviere, 1½c copies, W. A. Wilde Co. Large colored copies from $.50 to $2 at The House of Art.

Discussing the story's end:

What influence did Daniel have upon the king and people of the kingdom because he refused to do wrong to save himself? (Daniel 6:25-28)

How would the story have ended if Daniel had stopped praying because he was afraid?

Thinking about modern lions:

There's no danger of our being thrown to real lions today. But sometimes we do wrong because we are afraid of being laughed at or being called a "sissy". We seem more afraid of these than Daniel was of lions.

What are some of the lions (fears which keep us from doing right) which we are afraid of sometimes?

Worshiping

Working on the class activity

Illustrating the story of Daniel, dramatizing it, or drawing some "modern lions" in individual notebooks

WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM NEHEMIAH?

The Story Outlined:

Nehemiah 1:1-11—Nehemiah pleads with God for his people.
Nehemiah 2:1-8—After four months his prayer is answered.
Nehemiah 2:9-20—Nehemiah undertakes a great task.
Nehemiah 3:1-32—Nehemiah and his helpers organize the work.
Nehemiah 4:1-23—Enemies try to stop the work.
Nehemiah 5:1-13—Some wrong things need to be made right.
Nehemiah 6:1-16—In spite of further plots, the wall is finished.
Nehemiah 8:1-9:3—The people give thanks to God, hear His Word, and give Him their hearts anew.

Possible Activities:

Listening to the story

Studying Nehemiah's prayers to see how he shows the truth of this statement, "Prayer is work; prayer works; prayer leads to work." (W. W. White): noting in each case the request made and the answer (1:11 & 2:6; 2:4 & 2:6; 4:9 & 4:15; 6:9 & 6:15) N.B., attention should be called to the contrast between the form of prayer in 1:4-11 and 2:4.

Noting that prayer includes listening; finding out the helpful things Nehemiah heard when he listened to God (2:12, 18; 7:5)

Thinking and talking about the fact that Nehemiah knew that walls about a city are not enough, that there is something more important (8:1-8, 9:1-3)

Answering the following questions:

What might have happened if:

Nehemiah had stayed in Shushan, the palace, weeping and praying for his people in Jerusalem?

Nehemiah had gone before the king, had hurried back to Jerusalem, started to build the wall, and talked to his enemies without once asking God to help him?

Nehemiah had sat upon the broken-down wall and said, "O Lord God, the enemies are about to come in. I beseech Thee to keep them out"?

Drawing pictures to tell the story of Nehemiah in their notebooks

Answering the question, "What can I learn from Nehemiah?"

Deciding why this would be a good rule to follow when we are responsible for some task: "Pray as if everything depends upon God; work as if everything depends upon you."

Thinking about times when we ought to be glad to pause and say "Thank You" to God

Thinking of ways in which we can help God answer our own prayers, as Nehemiah did
Planning and participating in worship
Adding Nehemiah's story to the class activity

Supplementary Materials:

Stories of people who helped God answer their own prayers
Prayers asking God's help to do some of the things which need to be done in the world today
Special hymn: Soldiers of Christ, Arise

WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM MICAH?

The Story Told, with special emphasis on Micah 4:1-7 and 5:2, 4, 5a
Verses to look up:

Micah 2:1-2 —The rich oppressed the poor.
2:9 —The rich gained their riches unfairly, and lived in luxury.
3:5-11 —The leaders were corrupt.
3:11 —The people argued that God would protect them because the temple was in their midst.
3:12 —Micah promised destruction to the present city.
4:1-7 —Micah told of the ideal Jerusalem which would be founded some day.
5:2-5a; —Micah told the people of the Promised One who would be King and Saviour, and the bringer of peace.
6:8 —Micah described true religion to the people who were mixed up about what God wanted them to do.
7:1-6 —Micah felt lonely.
7:18-20—Micah prayed to God.

Questions to discuss:

What were the Israelites doing during the time of Micah, which made them people whom God could not use for His work in the world? (2:1-2, 9; 3:5-11)

Why did they not get alarmed when Micah told them that they were going to be destroyed?

How could God destroy Jerusalem, and let the people in it go captive, and still keep the promise He had made to Abraham and Jacob, the promise to bless their descendants and bless the world through them?

What hope did Micah have to make him happy even while living in a very sad time? (4:1-7; 5:2-5a)

How do you think Micah knew what was going to happen hundreds of years later?

When Micah felt lonely, what did he do to help himself feel better?

Of what things about God was Micah sure?

Which of Micah's prophecies have been fulfilled?

Which of Micah's prophecies have not yet been fulfilled?

What kind of life did Micah say was a religious life? (6:8)

What promises which encouraged Micah, encourage you, too?

Possible Activities:

Listening to the story of Micah

Discussing the story of Micah

Participating in worship centered around some of the verses from Micah.

Including Micah in class project

Reviewing Old Testament prophecies about Jesus' coming and charting them

Supplementary Materials:

Stories and illustrations:

"God So Loved The World" I–28

"A Sermonette" I–69

"The Israelites' Hope" III–50

WINDING UP THE UNIT

A Backward Look:

Through games, pictures, the re-telling of the stories, the identifying of selected Bible verses and the re-stating of the contribution of each character studied, the children could be led to review the unit as a whole. The following descriptive titles, for example, might be used as the basis of a guessing game, omitting the name and asking in jumbled order, "Who was (or were) .....?"

(Joshua,) the leader who took a stand

(The Judges,) the people God used to answer the people's prayers

(Ruth,) the girl who made a hard choice

(Samuel,) the boy who served in a church

(David,) the boy who did what "couldn't be done"

(Jonathan,) the prince who was a true friend

(David,) the young man who loved his enemy

(David,) the king who knew what to do when he made a mistake

(Solomon,) the king who made a good choice but failed to live up to it

(Elijah,) the man who dared speak out for the right

(Elisha,) the man who always remembered that God was with him

(Amos,) the farmer who tried to save his country

(Josiah,) the boy who found a guide for right living

(Jonah,) the unwilling missionary

(Esther,) the queen who felt responsible for her people

(Job,) the man who stood the test

(Daniel,) the captive who refused to do wrong to save himself

(Nehemiah,) the exile who prayed while he worked and worked while he prayed

(Micah,) the man who had faith to believe that Christ would come

If preferred, the children might themselves work out a descriptive title for each character and then use these as the basis for a game.

Finishing Touches on the Class Activity:

If the unifying activity undertaken has been the writing of plays in order to choose and present the best (one, two, or even three, might be given as an evening's program) the process of selection and preparation would no doubt by this time be well under way. A final session or two would probably be needed for completing this preparation.

If the activity has been the planning of tableaux, these would now be ready for final preparation, costuming, settings, accompanying narratives, etc.

Should the activity have been the making of a book of heroes, hero gallery, or a series of miniature scenes, these, too, would no doubt need to be put into final form for some kind of presentation or exhibit.

Plans for a Closing Worship Service:

Whatever the nature of the program presented, a period of worship should be planned as an integral part of it. This would of course be composed of a combination of hymns, Scripture passages, poems, etc., which have been used during the course of the unit.

UNIT V

HOW CAN THE BIBLE HELP ME EVERY DAY?
(A Study of the Bible for Personal Devotions)

OBJECTIVES:

To help the children to see that the value of the Bible to us personally is determined by the use we make of it

To deepen their appreciation of its potential value and their desire to benefit by it

To guide them in their attempts to appropriate it and to build the habit of using it regularly

POSSIBLE UNIFYING ACTIVITIES:

Making a Bible index, to be pasted in front of each child's Bible, listing and locating favorite stories

Making a Bible bookmark

Determining to send a part of individual summer earnings to the American Bible Society to help in the work of sharing the Bible with those who do not have it

THEME HYMN FOR UNIT:

Saviour, like a Shepherd lead us (Bradbury 8.7.8.7.D)

UNIT MEMORY WORK:

Psalm 119:11, 105

SUGGESTIONS FOR PROCEDURE

Guided Thinking:

Recognizing some common-sense facts of life by talking over each of the following and then completing each unfinished statement and writing it in their notebooks (If desired, these may be illustrated by original drawings or cut-out pictures of bread, milk, medicine, the Bible):

Bread in a bakery, or on your table, contains the things you need to nourish your body. But if left in the bakery or on your table, it will do you no good. What must you do?

If bread is to help me I must .....

Milk in your refrigerator, or in your glass, has in it the vitamins you need to make you strong. But if left in the bottle or the glass, these vitamins will do you no good. Wha' ıust you do?

If milk is to make me strong I must .....

Medicine in a drug store, or in your cabinet, may have in it just what you need to cure some illness. But if left in the drug store or on the shelf, it will do you no good. What must you do?

If medicine is to cure me I must .....

God's Word between the covers of your Bible has the power

to help you live like a child of God. But if left between the covers of your Bible, it will do you no good. What must you do?

If God's Word is to help me I must .....

Listening to and discussing the story of the Bible in Ethiopia:

TOO HOLY TO TOUCH

Many, many years ago, the queen of Sheba, the queen of Ethiopia, went to Solomon to see his wealth and to learn of his wisdom. While in his kingdom she heard of his God and of his worship. Many, many years later an Ethiopian eunuch came to Jerusalem to worship the God of whom Sheba's queen had told. On his way home he heard more. He heard of God's Son through the early missionary Philip and was baptized by him in the river. The eunuch had a copy of the Old Testament for he was reading it when Philip found him. He heard a part of the story of the New Testament, for Philip told him the story of Jesus. He must have taken both back to his own country. What a wonderful chance for the people! And yet Ethiopia is not a Christian nation.

In Ethiopia today there are Bibles, Bibles that have been there for many generations; but until modern missionaries went, there was almost no knowledge of the Bible in the minds of the people. In Ethiopia today there are many small models of the "ark of the covenant", but until modern missionaries came, there was little knowledge of how one could worship God. In Ethiopia today there are bottles of "holy water" from the River Jordan and there are many who have seen the ceremony of baptism but, until modern missionaries went, there was little Christian living.

For in Ethiopia the Bible has been so sacred that it has been kept wrapped in yards and yards of silk cloth. It is so holy that it is only brought out on special occasions, unwrapped by the priests and read in a language which the people cannot understand. Crowds come to such services as that held on John the Baptist day when the priests bring the arks to the river's edge and baptize them with "holy water." Crowds listen as the priest reads the Book. The emperor, Haile Selassie, himself used to listen to the reading, a sad look on his face because he knew the people did not understand. Crowds watch as, after the ceremony, the Bible is again wrapped in its yards of silk and stored away.

And so for generations the people of Ethiopia have reverenced the Bible. And yet, for generations the people of Ethiopia have lived without the knowledge of God and of His Son, Jesus Christ. The Holy Bible has been too holy to touch.

Why is Ethiopia not a Christian nation?

Have you ever known of people in our country who reverence the Bible so much that they will not allow anything to be placed

on top of it or will not allow it out of its "special" place and yet who never read it? Is this real reverence? What is likely to happen in such a home?

Discussing again the story of Josiah and the Lost Bible

Purposing:

With the completion of the above discussion, the question of this unit naturally follows: "How can the Bible help me every day?" It would be well at this point to look back over the year to the study of Our Bible, what it is, how it came to be, how its favorite story is kept in the hearts of the people of the world, and what its people can teach us about living as God's children. "What good has all this study done us?" would be one way to clinch the purposing in the light of the "common-sense facts" just discussed. Letting the individual children tell the three things in the year's study which have helped them most in their everyday life would be helpful.

Planning:

How much can be done in this unit depends upon the time available for it. If at all possible, at least two sessions should be given to this question. As a guide to the class planning of the general procedure, the teacher might use a plan something like the following:

How would you like to do this?

Most of the books you use in school have what we call an *index* in the front in order to help you find things easily. Your Bible, too, as you know, has an index listing the names of the Bible books and giving the number of the page on which each book begins. But that index will not help you to find special stories and verses you may want to read and think about for certain reasons. If you want that kind of index, you will have to make your own. Why not do that during these last weeks of school this year so that you will always have it on hand, pasted in the front of your own Bible, to use when you need it?

It will probably take several pages and you will, of course, want to write or print them very neatly so that as you grow older you will not be ashamed of them. It would be a good idea to leave extra space under each heading for other things you may want to add later. If you wish to decorate your index with a simple border or small design, that would make it more interesting.

Some Sample Suggestions:

Using the blackboard and getting suggestions from the group, a general plan may be worked out, with sample passages listed, from which point each child will continue to evolve a *personal* index. The following is a sample of a beginning:

My Favorite Psalms:	*Where to Find:*
The Shepherd Psalm	Psalm 23
The Psalm	Psalm 67
The Psalm	Psalm 100
The Psalm	Psalm 121

* * *

My Favorite Stories:	
Story of Creation	Genesis 1 & 2
Joseph and His Brothers	Genesis 37-50

* * *

Verses to Help Me Pray:	
When I want to thank God:	Psalm 106:1
	Psalm 104:24
	Psalm 103:1-4
When I have done wrong:	Psalm 51:142
	Psalm 51:10-12
	Psalm 32:5
When I need to know what is right:	Psalm 25:4
	Psalm 19:14
When I am in trouble:	Psalm 22:11
	Psalm 86:6-7
	John 14:1
When I want to pray for missions:	Psalm 72:18-19

* * *

Promises of God to Remember:	*Where to Find:*
His promise to forgive my sins:	I John 1:9
	Isaiah 1:18
His promise to be my Guide:	Psalm 32:8-9
	Psalm 48:14
His promise to care for me:	Matthew 10:29-31
	Matthew 6:31-34
His promise to be with me:	Isaiah 41:10

* * *

Things I Need to Hear God Say to Me:	
When I am tempted to do wrong:	Exodus 20
When I am tempted to be afraid:	Joshua 1:9
	Deuteronomy 31:8
When I am tempted to be angry with someone:	Proverbs 16:32
When I am tempted to hold a grudge:	Matthew 6:43-44
	Matthew 18:21-22
When I am tempted to be unkind:	I John 3:18
When I am tempted to be selfish:	Romans 15:2

A Good Motto for My Bible Reading:

"But be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only."

—James 1:22

In addition, you might like to do this:

Your Bible index is for *you* to use so that the Bible may help you every day. Perhaps you might also like to help someone you know by making a Bible bookmark on which you list a few of the verses included in your own index, something like this:

When you are *worried,* read John 14:1.

When you are *lonely,* read Isaiah 41:10.

If you prefer, you may send to the American Bible Society for a printed bookmark, "Where to Look in the Bible." You can also write to the American Bible Society for an attractive individual "reading record"—"Class reading records" can also be ordered. These are helpful as guides and "encouragers" to your reading.

Carrying Out the Plans Made:

Some of the work on the Bible index might be done individually at home; further work might be done in the following session in small groups or individually, under the supervision of the teacher. The idea that this index is to be a growing thing should be stressed. The bookmark, of course, would be much more limited in scope.

At each session there should be a high point of worship, probably informal and rather personal, centered about the things the children themselves consider most helpful. This could also be made to include favorite hymns and helpful prayers and poems. The hymn previously learned could well be repeated here, "Thy Word is Like a Garden, Lord."

A Concluding Story:

THE QUESTION

Mr. McLauchlin sat down to rest on the steps of a baked-earth home on the side of one of the inland hills of China.

The master of the home was gracious, brought tea and cakes and sat down, eager for conversation.

"What book do you have there?" he asked, noticing the worn-looking volume tucked into the missionary's lunch basket. "It is a book which tells a wonderful story," answered Mr. McLauchlin. "Many, many years ago . . ." and the missionary began to tell the story of God's creation of the world, His love for man, of man's wandering from Him, of God's final sending of His Son as a sacrifice

for sin, to bring man back to Him now and in the life to come.

It was a long story; but the old Chinese man listened attentively throughout. When it was finished, he turned to Mr. McLauchlin and said, "Do you and the other people in America really believe that story? Do they really believe that Book?"

"Why, yes," said Mr. Lauchlin, "we have been believing it for years, for many generations."

"Look up on the hill yonder," said the old man. "Do you see those graves, dozens of them? My father is buried up there. He lived and died without ever once hearing of the wonderful story you tell. His father is buried beside him. He also lived and died in ignorance of your good news. His father lies by him. He did not even know there was a book such as that which you possess. If you and your people have had this book for so many years, and if you really believe the message it tells, why hasn't some one told us of it before?"

Mr. McLauchlin was silent. He could not answer the old man's question.

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